National Library of Canada
Canadian Theses Service
Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada
Services des thèses canadiennes

CANADIAN THESES

THÈSES CANADIENNES

NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

THIS DISSERTATION
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED

LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE

NL 339 (r. 86/01)

Canada

National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Division
Division des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

0-315-24819-X

(81)

PERMISSION TO MICROFILM — AUTORISATION DE MICROFILMER

• Please print or type — Écrire en lettres moulées ou dactylographier

Full Name of Author — Nom complet de l'auteur

EVA MAY HALEY

Date of Birth — Date de naissance	Country of Birth — Lieu de naissance
1 MAY, 1934	CANADA

Permanent Address — Résidence fixe

11803 - 91 Ave, Edmonton, Alberta

Title of Thesis — Titre de la thèse

"The Concept of Courtesy in Malory's Morte Darthur"

University — Université

University of Alberta

Degree for which thesis was presented — Grade pour lequel cette thèse fut présentée

Master of Arts

Year this degree conferred — Année d'obtention de ce grade	Name of Supervisor — Nom du directeur de thèse
1984	Professor M.A. Whitaker

Permission is hereby granted to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

L'autorisation est, par la présente, accordée à la BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DU CANADA de microfilmer cette thèse et de prêter ou de vendre des exemplaires du film.

L'auteur se réserve les autres droits de publication; ni la thèse ni de longs extraits de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans l'autorisation écrite de l'auteur.

Date	Signature
July 9, 1984	Eva Haley

July 9, 1984

NL-91 (4/77)

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE CONCEPT OF COURTESY IN MALORY'S MORTE DARTHUR

by

EVA M. HALEY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF Master of Arts

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL 1984

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR EVA M. HALEY

TITLE OF THESIS THE CONCEPT OF COURTESY IN MALORY'S 'MORTE DARTHUR

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED Master of Arts

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED FALL 1984

Permission is hereby granted to THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

(SIGNED) Eva Haley

PERMANENT ADDRESS:

11803 91 Ave

Edmonton

Alberta

DATED July 9 1984

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled THE CONCEPT OF COURTESY IN MALORY'S MORTE DARTHUR submitted by EVA M. HALEY in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Muriel A. Whitaker
.....

Supervisor

Larry D. McKill
.....

Gethe Bleeman Warnke
.....

Date. June 25, 1964.....

To My Family

Abstract

This thesis proposes to study the depiction of courtesy in Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur (1485). Chapter 1 discusses the historical background which influenced the meaning of courtesy. Feudal, religious and courtly developments are traced in the characteristics demanded of the courteous individual.

Chapter 2 presents the courtesy appropriate for rulers by pointing out that the ideal ruler, King Arthur, has divine approval, heroic status and a willingness to learn new and better ways so that he may create an orderly, peaceful, Christian society. Queen Guenevere takes her place at Arthur's side, providing inspiration and instruction in courtly behaviour.

Chapter 3 describes the courtesy of secular knights who strive to follow the code of chivalry included in the behaviour of courteous knights and to serve ladies faithfully. Gareth, Torre, Urry, Palomides, La Cote Male Tayle and Tristram are among the "beste" knights, but Lancelot is the "floure of chyvalry" and the ideal knight who provides inspiration for others. Gawain represents the old way of vengeance which should be replaced by courtesy.

Chapter 4 shows the pure Christian courtesy of Galahad which requires asceticism and withdrawal from the world, a

course which Lancelot and Guenevere turn to when the end of the Round Table society is near. The courtesy of Christians concentrates on personal salvation, unlike the courtesy of secular knights which places great stress on fellowship and aid to the distressed.

Courtesy becomes inadequate to cover the complexities of human communication, but it still manages to preserve those virtues, proven by tradition, to be worthy of study and emulation.

Acknowledgements

To Professor M. A. Whitaker for sharing her wide knowledge of medieval literature and for her guidance in preparing this thesis, I would like to express my thanks. The suggestions of Professor L. N. McKill concerning style and content are gratefully acknowledged. Finally, my sons Richard and John, who provided technical expertise, deserve special mention.

Table of Contents

Chapter — Page

I. The Meanings of Courtesy 1

II. The Courtesy of Rulers 46

III. The Courtesy of Secular Knights 83

IV. The Courtesy of Christians 118

V. Conclusion 150

Bibliography 153

I. The Meanings of Courtesy

The term courtesy is so familiar to modern English-speakers that it may create misunderstandings in the interpretation of Malory's Morte Darthur. Malory's "curtesy" was a much more complex, idealistic quality than the modern definition of courtesy as a "kind, polite, considerate manner or approach" (1983)[1] would suggest. Courtesy in Morte Darthur refers to an ideal comprising elements of chivalric virtues themselves derived from various sources, feudal, religious and courtly, from which the ethical base of chivalry, as it had developed by the fifteenth century, arose.[2] Malory provides an example of a courtly society in which this ideal behaviour is an inspirational aid to the pursuit of justice and peace.

A brief historical examination of the elements which compose this ideal is necessary to ensure understanding of the virtue of courtesy as it was perceived in the fifteenth century. Approved behaviour relating to chivalry is part of the meaning. Malory begins his revelation of King Arthur's virtues by illustrating their chivalric components. Courage,

---

[1] J. B. Sykes, ed., Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983).

[2] Sidney Painter, French Chivalry (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), p. 172; Diane Bornstein, Mirrors of Courtesy (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, The Shoestring Press, Inc., 1975), pp. 9-10. J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought and Art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth Centuries (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1927), p. 297.

prowess, skill in battle and loyalty provide a foundation for further refinements to his code of behaviour. In Morte Darthur these virtues are common to the nobility and are inherited. Courtesy, or well-mannered conduct, in medieval courts was meant to control behaviour as well as to celebrate the meaning behind courtesy. Physical strength was the quality that made knights rulers in the early Middle Ages, but at court a new set of personal qualities which were useful in social situations became necessary to allow the complex business of government to proceed smoothly.[3] The knight, as a member of the ruling class, was expected to be ~~an~~ example of a virtuous individual, dedicated to maintaining justice and peace but also to be conversant with all forms of culture. "To be representative of true culture means to produce by conduct, by customs, by manners, by costume, by deportment, the illusion of a heroic being, full of dignity and honour, of wisdom and, at all events, of courtesy."[4] Courtly love, a concept spread by the troubadours in the twelfth century and refined by poets in the literature of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is another factor which influenced the meaning of the word courtesy. It changed the role of ladies in the life of the court and elevated the importance of service to ladies to the status of a sacred trust. The third great influence on

---

[3] Richard Barber, The Knight and Chivalry (Ipswich: Boydell Press, 1970), p. 27; Bornstein, Mirrors of Courtesy, p. 19; Painter, French Chivalry, p. 3; Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 46.

[4] Huizinga, p. 30. The knight was a type of the hero.

the development of the many shades of meaning given to courtesy is Christianity. Pity, mercy and concern for the helpless were virtues encouraged by Christian leaders. The idea that a courteous knight fought on God's behalf to create justice on earth, receiving prowess as an indication of divine approval, suggested that he was an agent of the higher power.

William Caxton, whose edition of Morte Darthur made Malory's tale widely available in 1485, recognized the importance of the ideal of courtesy to Malory. He published several other works which indicate his own interest in the effect which a code of behaviour for rulers has on public morality.[5] The interest he expresses in the Prologues to his books was encouraged by his supporters, "many noble and dyuers gentylmen of thys royaume of England."[6] In the Prologue to The Order of Chyualry,[7] Caxton suggests that a good example set by the ruling class, patterned on divine "gouvernynge" and "ordeynynge," will be passed down to "knyghtes" and thence to the "moyen peple" as it was in "auncyent tyme," when the courtesy of King Arthur was renowned throughout the world.[8] Caxton was successful in his search for Englishmen who showed "Manhode/ curtosye/

---

[5] William Caxton, Order of Chyualry, 1484; The Book of Good Manners, 1487; The Royal Book, 1488; The Fayttes of Armes, 1489.

[6] J. Crotch, ed., The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 92.

[7] William Caxton, trans., The Book of the Order of Chyualry, from a French version of Ramon Lull's "Le Libre del Orde Cauayleria," ed. Alfred Byles (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 81.

[8] Crotch, pp. 81-84.

gentylnesse," comparable to that shown by Lancelot, Galahad and Tristam. He cites several noble figures, Richard the Lion-hearted, Edward I and Edward III, Henry V and Montague, Earl of Salisbury, whose exemplary behaviour encouraged him to believe that young knights of his time could live up to the worthy demands of "thordre of chyualry," for the betterment of society. Fifteenth-century authors like Caxton placed special emphasis on courtesy which accompanied chivalric idealism and for which King Arthur's court was famed.

Virtues admired in feudal times, when the knight's occupation was battle, are included in the meaning of the term courtesy.' The main elements of feudal chivalry which consist of prowess, involving courage in battle and success in games, concern for the honour and personal prestige of the knight, and loyalty to other knights, provide a foundation for an ideal encompassing all the virtues expected of a courtier, virtues which included a Christian morality and a desire to improve society. Feudal chivalry had well-organized rules passed down by experienced knights to younger ones in a time-honoured manner, but authors in the fifteenth century showed special interest in codifying and recording these rules, modifying them and offering personal insights into the duties of a courtier. Training manuals describing practical details of the preparation of an army, tactics, organization and discipline are based on a

---

' Painter, Chapter 2.

fourth-century manual, De Re Militari, written by Flavius Vegetius Renatus. De Re Militari was translated into English for Thomas, Lord Berkeley in 1408.[10] A verse translation called Knyghthode and Bataile, written about 1457 by a supporter of Henry VI, stresses the medieval virtues of honour, good birth and courage.[11] This author transforms the code of chivalry into an expression of what he believes an ideal warrior should be like, approaching a description of what Malory includes in his definition of courtesy rather than simply delineating practical, tested rules for success in battle. Duty to the king is high on his list of the reponsibilities of a knight.

The Boke of Noblesse, written by William Worcester around 1450 to encourage Henry VI in a policy of conquering France and later revised for subsequent monarchs, is less idealistic than Knyghthode and Bataille, although the author says that it is written to encourage nobles in "good lyuyng" so they may "come to virtue & honour."[12] A member of Sir John Fastolf's household, Worcester quotes his master's practical policy of discretion over valor. Worcester also expresses the belief that waging war is exclusively the right of the aristocracy and that a military life is the best occupation for a noble.

---

[10] Bornstein, pp. 30-31.
[11] Cited by Bornstein, p. 34.
[12] William Worcester, The Boke of Noblesse, trans. J. Larke, ed. Caxton, Reel #4, Shipment 1, University of Alberta Micromaterials.

The Livre des fais d'armes et de chevalerie (circa 1410), a military manual written by Christine de Pisan which urges implementation of rules to mitigate war's unnecessary cruelties, reveals her attitude toward the ideal of courtesy in knighthood, where Christian morality is the basis for courtesy. Christine's source for her last two chapters is Honoré Bonet's Tree of Battles.[13] Bonet describes the distinction between just and unjust wars, a concern of the medieval church based on the dogma of Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine.[14] Christine de Pisan agrees with Bonet that a warrior is saved if he dies,

> . . . in a bataylle grownded upon a iuste and gode quarelle, for to help the ryght, or that hit be for the true deffense of the lande, or for the comonwele, or for to kepe the fraunches [freedom] and good customes of the place or countrey.'[15]

Christine also agrees that pillaging and attacking civilians should be condemned and adds that slaying prisoners in battle, unless they are dangerous, is not desirable. Besides practical details of training, arming and maintaining an army, Christine discusses matters of precedence and responsibilities of vassal to lord, oaths of fidelity and ethical matters, such as the distinction between "wiles" and

---

[13] Christine de Pisan, The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye, trans. William Caxton (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), p. xlvi.

[14] Aquinas, Saint Thomas, "Summa Theologica," in Selected Political Writings, trans. J.G. Dawson, Intro. A. D'Entreves (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965), p. 159. Saint Augustine, City of God, (De Civitate Dei) trans. John Healey (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1909), XIX, Chapt. XII, XIII, 224-228.

[15] Pisan, Fayttes of Armes, p. xlviii.

"treachery" (p. 213).

William Caxton's translation of Christine's work, which he called The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye (1489) was printed, he says, for "euery gentylman born to armes" as well as "all manere of men of werre," not only aristocratic leaders but professional soldiers, who might benefit from following the ideals he describes. The soldier should be, in Caxton's view, strong, brave and skillful but also a practising Christian who values moderation, good judgement, courteous speech, pity and who takes his calling seriously:

> The maners and condiciouns whiche belongen to a good conestable ben these/ that he be not testif/ hastyf/ hoot/ fell/ ne angry/ But amesured and attemporat rightful in iustice/ benygne in conuersacioun of hye mayntene & of lytyl wordes/ Sadde in countenaunce/ no grete dyseur of truffes/ verytable in worde and promesse/ hardy: sure: & diligent: not coueytous/ fiers to his enemyes/ pyetous to them that be vainquissed/ and to them that be vnder hym he be not lightly angry/ ne be not moeued for lytyl occasion/ ne byleue ouer hastely for lityl apprence/ Ne yeue fayth to wordes whiche haue ne colour of trouthe . . .'[16]

Humane treatment of prisoners is advocated and a distinction is drawn between just and unjust wars.'[17] The rules of the code of knighthood were not just suggestions, since the law recognized them.'[18]

---

[16] Pisan, Fayttes of Armes, p. 23.
[17] Pisan, Fayttes of Armes, p. 24ff.
[18] C. T. Allmand, "The Civil Lawyers," in Profession, Vocation and Culture in the Later Middle Ages (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982), p. 156. M. Keen, The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 154-55, 239.

Development of the complex meanings of courtesy which Malory uses follows the decline of a simple feudal system. Personal loyalty to a feudal lord was gradually directed to include aspirations for a better society, concern for the weak and helpless and a desire to foster learning and sensitivity in the ruling class. During the period when a money-based economy gradually expanded sources of revenue for the aristocracy[19] and the occupation of the knight became less tied to waging war, the code of chivalry with its monopoly on the virtues of courtesy still set the aristocracy apart from the lower classes.[20] "Chivalry moved from the realm of business and work, to the realm of social ritual and ceremony, to the realm of play" and provided a set of rules, intended for a warrior class but modified for courtiers.[21]

In the sixth book of Policraticus (c.1159) John of Salisbury bases his ideal knight on a Roman model, extolling temperance, chastity, courage, strength, skill at arms and strategic ability, all applied in the service of God and the church. Knights should find their calling in "defense of the commonwealth." John of Salisbury compares knights with priests and approves of a religious ceremony for initiation of the knight into the select brotherhood. [22]

---

[19] Painter, pp. 10-15.

[20] See "Bastard feudalism", Painter, p. 15ff; Bornstein, pp. 17, 24-5; K.B. McFarlane, England and the Hundred Years War (London: Hambleton Press, 1981), pp. 162-3.

[21] Bornstein, p. 17.

[22] John of Salisbury, Policraticus, The Statesman's Book, ed. Murray Markland (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1979), pp. 44-50. See also Painter, p. 72.

Stephen of Fougères, clerk in the court of Henry II (1154-1189), wrote Livre des Manières [23] expressing many of the same beliefs as John of Salisbury and also emphasizing that noble birth was an essential part of chivalry and courtesy. He writes of two swords, a temporal and a spiritual, the latter intended to represent the power clerks have in excommunicating wrong-doers. He is convinced that the two orders, clergy and knights, must cooperate in fighting evil.

The importance of Christian morality as a base for courtesy cannot be over-emphasized. Christian leaders did their best to mold the ruling class into an effective force to help them preserve the rights and powers of the church. Not only were they concerned about encouraging development of Christian virtues in chivalrous knights as a means of improving conditions for the helpless in society, a strong movement to promote the power of the church organization motivated ecclesiastics. Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) was especially demanding in his decree concerning the rights of the church to receive homage and bestow justice.[24] King Henry IV of Germany declared Gregory a usurper of power a sin for which he was excommunicated in 1076 and again in 1080. A compromise was finally agreed upon by successors of Henry IV and Gregory VII at Worms in 1122 after many years

---

[23] V. Langlois, La Vie en France: Etienne von Fougière's "Livre des Manières," ed. Josef Kremer (Paris: Hachett, 1925), pp. 1-26.

[24] "Dictus Papae" (1075), reproduced in "Pope Gregory VII," Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages, ed. E. F. Henderson (London: George Bell, 1892), pp. 366-67.

of argument over the rights of the church in the king's dominions. The struggle for absolute power continued, however, and Frederick II was excommunicated and deposed in 1245 by Pope Innocent IV. Pope Hadrian IV created a similar stir when he chastised Frederick Barbarossa in 1157 for failing to punish the German subjects guilty of assaulting the archbishop of Lund and keeping him in prison. In a letter that he sent with two cardinals, he maintained that the power of the Emperor had been granted by Rome; therefore the church was senior in authority.[25]

In the fourteenth century secular philosophers defended the autonomy of the state, arguing that the Church should not be given absolute power over all aspects of society. John of Paris wrote Tractatus de Potestate Regia et Papali in 1302-3 suggesting a suggesting a compromise in the argument. "The spiritual power is greater; therefore it excels in dignity" and yet the "secular power is greater than the spiritual in some things, namely in temporal affairs."[26] William of Ockham (1299-1350) went further in his Dialogues stating that a heretical pope can, and should be, deposed by a general council, citing the example of Pope John XXII. John Wycliff (1324-1384) made several theological suggestions for improvement of religion as taught by the church, besides attacking the claims of the pope on the

---

[25] "The Incident of Besancon, "in The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa, trans. C. C. Microw (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), pp. 180-184. Cited by Brian Tierney in The Crisis of Church and State [1050-1300] (Englewood Ciffs New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964), p. 192.

[26] From Tierney, pp. 188-89.

temporal goods of the kingdom. His ideas were formally condemned in 1382 at a council in London.

However, despite the claims and counterclaims made by church and state concerning their relative powers, "medieval thought did not permit ideal forms of noble life, independent of religion,"[27] as Christianity permeated all thoughts and actions of the period. The influential Thomas Aquinas believed in unity of the societies, Church and state, while differentiating their functions. The ideals of the Church survived as a guiding principle and are clearly visible in the meaning of courtesy . Pity, mercy and aiding the helpless, expecially women, are indispensible ingredients of courtesy based on Christian precepts.

By stressing disapproval of violence the church tried to reduce the suffering of the populace. The Peace of God, proclaimed in the Synod of Charroux (989), forbade robbing the poor and threatened excommunication for anyone convicted of injuring innocent, unarmed clergymen.[28] The truce for the Bishopric of Terouanne (1063) laid down conditions for "the time of peace which is commonly called the truce of God, and which begins with sunset on Wednesday and lasts until sunrise on Monday." Thirty years exile and compensation for the injury was threatened for anyone committing a violent act during the hours of peace. Every day was a day of peace from Advent to Epiphany, from Lent to Easter and from

---

[27] Huizinga, p. 58.

[28] O. J. Thatcher and E. H. McNeal, eds., A Source Book for Medieval History (New York: Charles Scribners, 1905), p. 412.

Rogation day to Pentecost.

That knights were not easily convinced of the need for pity and mercy in the business of ruling by force is evident from surviving documents and the recorded protests of moral leaders. Crusades proved a useful distraction for war-mongers, who were encouraged to leave the country and concentrate on eliminating the infidel. Pope Urban II (1095), as reported by Fulcher of Chartres, exhorted

> . . . those . . . who are accustomed to wage private wars wastefully even against Believers, (to) go forth against the Infidels in a battle worthy to be undertaken now and to be finished in victory. Now, let those, who until recently existed as plunderers, be soldiers of Christ.[29]

The continuing attempts of the church to tame the violence in society by controlling the ruling class of warriors, and by trying to encourage an elevation of ethical ideals, succeeded to a limited extent only. Ideals were accepted in theory but the practical soldier continued to wage war for profit and glory as the documents of the age testify. Atrocities committed in the name of Christianity during the Crusades, for example in the siege of Jerusalem,[30] were matched by brutality in wars closer to home, as the Christian ideal proved too demanding for the average knight to follow faithfully.[31] Christian pity and mercy were

---

[29] Fulcher of Chartres, Chronicle of the First Crusade, trans. M. E. McGinty (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1941), p. 16.

[30] Fulcher of Chartres, pp. 66-69.

[31] Froissart, "The Sack of Limoges," in The Chronicles of Froissart, trans. Lord Berners, ed. W. E. Henley (London: Long Acre, 1903), 2, 355-7.

submerged in the medieval belief that Christians had a solemn duty to condemn evil, forcefully if necessary, to promote their particular concept of Christian morality.[32] Furthermore, the chivalrous knight was trained to fight and believed he must win to maintain his honour. A conflict in the ideals of courtesy and the need for success in battle resulted.[33]

In the last quarter of the twelfth century a new ideal was added to the Christian feudal blend, one which was at least as effective as religion in modifying the chivalric concentration on war as a way of life. The virtues of romantic love as a means of elevating the aims of a chivalric knight, while improving his manners and increasing his ability to appreciate cultural pursuits, is "novel,"[34] having no precedent in Germanic or Latin tradition. C. S. Lewis finds that the idea which appeared quite suddenly could not be compared with the "tragic madness" of classical love.[35]

In southern France, where the aristocracy at peaceful, prosperous courts cultivated a refined life, contact with Eastern cultures, most likely introduced by Moorish minstrels and traders from Spain, changed the outlook of

---

[32] V. A. Kolve, The Play Called Corpus Christi (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966), p. 141.

[33] Painter, pp. 65,67,85; Barber, pp. 39,40; In the sermons of the fourteenth century G. R. Owst finds that the clergy were promoting the establishment of a City of God on earth. See G. R. Owst, Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933), p. 6.

[34] Painter, p. 95.

[35] C. S. Lewis, Allegory of Love (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 4.

courtiers in the Langue d'oc toward the place of romantic love in the life of the warrior. Encouraged by educated ladies at court, troubadours flourished, transmitting the new beliefs in an ideal love, as they travelled about the country.[36] Courtly love became a favoured diversion, acquiring increasingly elaborate rules.[37] The practice of courtesy was influenced by this change in attitude toward the importance of women as an improving force in society. Where chivalry was an exclusively male occupation, courtesy was practised by women as well. The influence of powerful ladies at court on the development of both rules and ideals of courtesy can be traced in the history of a increasing interest in courtly love.

Aristocratic ladies in the Middle Ages were traditionally afforded a low place in society by the Christian church. Since woman's curiosity concerning knowledge of good and evil was believed to have caused the Fall of Man, itself a symbol of the sorrows inherent in the human condition, woman became the scapegoat for all kinds of expressions of discontent.[38] Thomas Aquinas, in Summa Theologica, is of the opinion that "Woman is a help to man,"[39] but he affords her a low place in the hierarchy of

---

[36] C. S. Lewis, Allegory of Love, pp. 2-3. R. Boase, The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977), p. 123. H. J. Chaytor, The Troubadours and England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p.1.

[37] See Andreas Capellanus, The Art of Courtly Love, trans. J. J. Parry (New York: Frederick Unger, 1964).

[38] Saint Thomas Aquinas, p. 103.
Saint Augustine, City of God, 2, Chapter XIV.

[39] Aquinas, Summa Theologica, p. 155.

intelligent beings.[40] Chaucer's Wife of Bath complains of a long list of sins attributed to women. Accused of being a noisy chatterer, too interested in clothing, gossip and fun, unfaithful and self-serving, the Wife of Bath blames Saint Jerome for much of the ill-fame visited on women.[41] Aristocratic ladies accepted with enthusiasm the idealism of courtly love. The doctrine proclaimed responsibility for inspiration of all noble thoughts and preservation of high moral standards to be the role of the courtly lady.[42]

The unusual idea of the knight's ennoblement through constant pining for a noble lady who is his superior in the knowledge of an elevated love was glorified by the troubadours of the late twelfth century.[43] It spread to Northern France, England and Italy, largely through the efforts of minstrels, some of them noble Crusaders like William IX, grandfather of Eleanor of Aquitaine.[44]

Bernart de Ventadorn,[45] considered to be one of the greatest of the troubadours, wrote "Can vei la laulzeta

---

[40] Aquinas, pp. 131-3.

[41] Her useful discussion of the traditional attitude toward women is unfortunately made less poignant by confessions of her own past which prove that there may be truth in the male view of the female character.

[42] Alexander Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," Speculum, 28 (1953), pp. 44-63. Jean Frappier, Amour Courtois et Table Ronde (Geneve: Librairie Droz, 1973), pp. 44-5. Painter, pp. 96, 114. Andreas Capellanus, The Art of Courtly Love, trans. J. J. Parry (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1964).

[43] Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," p. 44. Love guards against baseness. Moderation and sound judgement are taught by courtly love which encourages beauty, good deeds, grace.

[44] H. J. Chaytor, Trouvères and Troubadours (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), p. 35.

[45] Chaytor, pp. 35-6.

mover," a description of the uplifting effects of an ideal love:

> Can vei la laulzeta movér
> De joi sas alas contral rai,
> Que s'oblid'e.s laissa chazer
> Per la doussor c'al cor li vai,
> Ai! tan grans enveya m'en ve
> De cui qu'eu veya jauzion
> Meravilhas ai, car desse
> Lo cor de dezirer no.m fon.[46]

Pain, grief, torment fill many of the poems which describe unrequited love for a lady whom the poet-lover addresses as "midons." A tendency to treat the lady as a divinity leads to confusion with Mariolotry.[47]

Encouragement of troubadours and their style of poetry reached a high point at the court of Eleanor of Aquitaine. Her daughter, Marie de Champagne, continued the promotion of a love which was "the sole source of ennoblement on earth,"[48] maintaining among her courtiers, a chaplain, Andreas Capellanus. Author of The Art of Courtly Love, a partly satirical, detailed guide to the practise of courtly love, Andreas says,

> ". . . A true lover cannot be degraded with any avarice. Love causes a rough and uncouth

---

[46] When I see a lark moving
His wings with joy toward the light,
Then forget and let himself fall
From the sweetness that enters his heart,
O! what great envy I feel
Toward whomever I see who's glad!
I wonder why my heart
Doesn't melt right away from desire.
Verse one of an eight-verse poem. J.J. Wilhelm, Medieval Song (New York: Dutton Publishing Co., 1971), #64, p. 134.

[47] Wilhelm, Medieval Song Medieval Song, p. 115.

[48] Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," p. 44.

> man to be distinguished for his handsomeness; it can endow a man even of the humblest birth with nobility of character; it blesses the proud with humility; and the man in love becomes accustomed to performing many services gracefully for everyone,". . . "it adorns a man, so to speak, with the virtue of chastity, because he who shines with the light of one love can hardly think of embracing another woman, even a beautiful one."[49]

After a glowing testament to the good effects of love, he declares that his purpose in describing it is to warn against love, for love deprives men of "all honour in this world."[50] He also repeats Saint Jerome's anti-feminist interpretation of Job 40: 16, which teaches that the Devil is the author of love and lechery,[51] and he repeats the usual denunciation of feminine character.[52] Women are, without exception, avaricious, envious, greedy, inconstant, proud, deceitful, wanton and prone to every evil thereby making true love impossible to find. Despite this apparent conflict of beliefs, the popularity of the treatise provides evidence that the subject was discussed eagerly at court.[53] Eleanor and her daughter, by encouraging these poets, advanced the cause of courtly love and helped to change the position of women at their court.

Another influential piece of literature was Guillaume de Lorris poem Roman de la Rose (circa 1240). An allegorical

---

[49] Andreas, p. 31.
[50] Andreas, p. 194.
[51] Andreas, p. 195.
[52] Andreas, p. 201.
[53] His intentions in producing this treatise are hard to interpret. He must be teasing his patroness at some point, by suggesting that courtly love, to the originator of its rules, was not intended to be taken seriously.

representation of the meaning of courtly love, with characters Dame Leisure, Gaiety, Amor, Beauty, Wealth, Liberality, Courtesy and Youth, it described all the necessary social qualities for a courtly romance. Tension is provided by Shame, Danger, Malebouche and Fear. A confrontation between Reason and Venus is about to occur when his story breaks off. Jean de Meun's continuation turns morality around, pointing out the possibilities for deception which the game of courtly love can conceal. Since the lover knows his lady to be "in nothynge ful certayne,"[54] she probably will not remain "daungerous" for long, a cynical acceptance of the anti-feminist view of female character previously mentioned. The abrupt change in tone, from Guillaume's tender love poem to Jean de Meun's cynical exposé, effected within one sentence as Jean de Meun takes up the tale, is another illustration of the medieval tendency to swing from one mood to another, that "perpetual oscillation between despair and distracted joy" which Huizinga finds characteristic of the age.[55] Lover's complaints were a favorite medium for expression of this tendency:

> "My deth I love, my lif ich hate,
> For a levedy shene;
> He is bright so dayes light,
> That is on me well sene:
> All I falewe so doth the lef

---

[54] Romaunt of the Rose, trans. Geoffrey Chaucer, from The Complete Poetry and Prose of Geoffry Chaucer, ed. John Fisher (New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1977), pp. 712-811, l.4444.

[55] Huizinga, p. 2.

In somer when it is grene.
Yef my thoght helpeth me noght,
To wham shall I me mene?

Sorewe and sike and drery mod
Bindeth me so faste,
That I wene to walke wod,
Yef it me lengere laste.
My sorewe, my care all with a word,
He mighte awey caste.
Whet helpeth thee, my swete lemman,
My lif thus for to gaste."[56]

The anti-feminist attack of Jean de Meun was condemned in writing by Christine de Pisan, the noted feminist and a supporter of the importance of courtesy as a civilizing influence,[57] rousing Jean de Montreuil to a defense of the Roman de la Rose.[58] Jean Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris joined the argument, calling the work immoral.[59] Although some, like Jean Gerson, took the idealism of courtly love seriously, for many it was a diversion, easily put aside when important matters required attention. Marshall Boucicaut, for example, was a veteran of Nicopolis, where a European army was attacked by a Turkish force and defeated with appalling loss of life on both sides. The Crusaders wasted fifteen days "in debaucherie, orgies and gambling" while besieging the city.[60] Froissart

---

[56] R. Davies, ed., Medieval English Lyrics, A Critical Anthology (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), #9, p. 59. Also #48, p. 127; #96, p. 189.

[57] Christine de Pisan, Le Livre des Trois Vertus, ed. M. Laigle (Paris: Honore Champion, 1912), p. 28.

[58] O. Cartellieri, The Court of Burgundy (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1929), p. 104.

[59] Jean Gerson, Ouvres Complètes (Belgium: Desclée & Cie., 1960), II, 65ff.

[60] A. Atiya, Crusade, Commerce and Culture (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1962), p. 108.

describes the high hopes of the Crusaders and the rationalization of the Marshal on his return.[1] In France the Marshal founded the Order of the "écu à la dame blanche" for the protection of ladies and widows.[2] Protection of the helpless, especially ladies, while praised as a novel, inspirational idea in poetry, was frequently forgotten in reality, just as courtly love was accepted by chivalric warriors as a pleasant, peacetime game. In 1401, at Epiphany, Duke Philip the Bold and the Duke of Bourbon founded a Court of Love. As a diversion during a plague epidemic, the Court of Love was dedicated "to the honour, praise and commendation and service of all noble ladies."[3] Poetry and debates "in the form of amorous law-suits to defend different opinions" were aired by the seven hundred members of the club which included defenders of Jean de Meun as well as those opposed to his cynicism.

Although courtly love, which encouraged adultery, had an indisputable influence on English courtesy, Gervase Mathew believes that it was the fashion to portray marriage as a courtly love affair in English literature.[4] Larry Benson explains this apparent preference for married love in

---

[1] The Chronicle of Froissart, trans. Lord Berners, ed. W. E. Henley (London: Long Acre, 1903), 6, 241-2. Although "Ther fled bothe Frenchmen, Englisshmen, Almayns, Scottes, Flemynges, and . . . other nacyons," Boucicault is able to call this adventure "good."

[2] Chastellain, "Le livre des faicts du marechal de Boucicault," in Collection des Mémoires Relatifs à l'Histoire de France, ed. Claude Petitot (Paris: Foucault, 1819-29), pp. 2-4. Cartellieri, pp. 105-10.

[3] Huizinga, p. 103.

[4] Gervase Mathew, The Court of Richard II (London: The Camelot Press, 1968), p. 105.

fifteenth-century England to be the result of deliberate imitation of literary romance and chivalry in real life, which created a need for a change of rules to conform to the standards of society.[65] In the twelfth century, French troubadours sang of an escapist game, an ideal love attractive to aristocratic ladies surrounded by young, unattached men who were constrained by an oath of loyalty to their lord. C. S. Lewis sees this form of courtly love as a "truency," similar to the Lord of Misrule tradition.[66]

From the beginning courtly love had detractors who were more fascinated by human psychology than idealism. However, as an addition to the courtly way of life, courtly love did much to improve manners and to raise the standards of behaviour among the ruling warrior class. Jacquet de Lalain for example, affirmed that,

> ". . . au dessus de tous autres se gouvernoi si modérément, que de toutes dames et damoiselles il étoit aimé et prisé. Et tellement se conduisit et gouverna en tous lieux et places où il se trouvoit, qu'il fut tant en la grâce du duc de Bourgogne . . ."[67]

Once the lady's good opinion became a prize which was sought after, the manly, worshipful way changed to include

---

[65] Larry Benson, Malory's "Morte Darthur" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 162.

[66] C. S. Lewis, Allegory of Love, p. 21.

[67] "Chronique du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain, frère et compagnon de l'ordre de la Torson d'or;" par Messire Georges Chastelain, chevalier, indiciaire et conseiller des Ducs de Bourgogne, Philippe-le-bon et Charles -le-téméraire. From Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'Histore de France, ed. J. A. C. Buchon (Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876), p. 614.

consideration for weaker beings, cleanliness and general deportment, along with knowledge of music, dancing, poetry and debating.[68] Courtliness meant observing moderation, cultivating humility, avoiding pride, promoting excellence in speech and actions and avoiding base behaviour.[69] The troubadours were responsible for promoting the idea that a nature which tends toward courtly behaviour is inspired by a capacity to love.[70]

It is interesting to speculate that courtly love, influential in development of manners and skills that were useful at court rather than on the battlefield, may have had as strong an influence as the church in changing habits of cruelty and force to a more gentle recognition of individual worth and dignity. Sidney Painter believes that "The training given the noble class by their acceptance of courtly love may have done much to prepare the knight to become a courtier and a gentleman."[71] Benson believes that the development of courtesy was influenced by literature.[72] Arthur Ferguson too suggests that the large body of chivalric literature in the later Middle Ages stimulated interest in the idealism of chivalry.[73]

---

[68] Chastelain, p. 612. The ladies take pride in the magnificence of their husbands as they watch from their windows and from the "hourts," Chastelain, p. 613, and they present the prizes at jousts, p. 613.

[69] Denomy, "Courtly Love and Courtliness," p. 62. Dupin, p. 127.

[70] Dupin, p. 93. C. S. Lewis, Allegory of Love, pp. 34 ff.

[71] Painter, p. 148.

[72] Benson, p. 162.

[73] Arthur Ferguson, The Indian Summer of English Chivalry (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press,

He notes that after the year 1413 "gentleman" was a class.

The importance of courtesy in the life of a chivalric knight increased as a result of changes in the social structure. When feudal society began to shift to a money-based economy in the thirteenth century, a new phenomenon began to develop in the form of fixed courts, presided over by the king or great noble.[74] By the fourteenth century a new court culture, distinct from the austere life of feudal courts, was enjoyed in several palaces, some like Westminster and the Tower of London inside the capital city; others, such as Sheen, Eltham, and Langley, outside the city, allowing the king and his courtiers variety in accommodation, an opportunity to indulge an interest in architecture and the room to display objets d'art. Enjoyment of beautiful things was cultivated as a sign that the noble possessed courteous virtues.

Richard II was the first English king who competed successfully with European monarchs in providing the nation with a court society rivalling the brilliance and luxury associated with Burgundian courts, acknowledged to be the most magnificent in Europe.[75] The new, glittering courts of Europe became a protected society apart from the unhappy, restless world at large, a refuge, for their occupants, from the sight of poverty, political unrest and social change,

---

[73] (cont'd)1960), pp. 9ff.

[74] Mathew, p. 9.

[75] Cartellieri, pp. 2, 17. This opulence was possible because Burgundy controlled the wealth of of Flanders. In 1369 Duke Philip of Burgundy married Countess Margaret, only daughter of Count Louis of Maele. Cartellieri, pp. 1-2.

which were the result of famine, plague and the miseries of continuing war.

A deliberate display of riches and power was justifed by relating it to the prevailing belief in the importance of renown.'[6] Renown or worth was proved and presented publicly in ceremonies for the admiration of the people. The greater the worth, the more elaborate the ceremony. Ideals were enacted, for the edification of the people and the glorification of the rulers, in processions and pageants. Elaborate costumes and brilliant colours, especially gold, the most "noble" in the hierarchy of colours, expressed the strong sentiment of the age concerning the special worth of the nobility whose place in society was to elevate morals and to safeguard the ideals which made life worth while. A sense of security could be instilled in the people through visible proof of the power of their leaders. In a ruling class whose strength was based on military power, success was the proof of worth, and success was visibly represented by grand displays of wealth.

Elaborate manners developed to dramatize ideals which were supposed to underlie courtly behaviour. Huizinga believes that "the more primitive a society is, the more the need of conforming real life to an ideal standard overflows beyond literature into the sphere of the actual."'[7] Medieval

---

'[6] Huizinga, p. 93. Bornstein, p. 43. D. Brewer, "Courtesy and the Gawain Poet," in Patterns of Love and Courtesy, ed. J. Lawlor (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), pp. 256-28.

'[7] Huizinga, p. 29.

society glorified the practises of chivalry. Furthermore an attempt was made to make the life of the courtier reflect chivalric ideals in a different sphere so that at court life was "regulated like a noble game."[78] The church condemned some of the aspirations of courtly society, in particular, those of courtly love, because of their tendency to encourage envy, pride and lust. Huizinga believes that "to be admitted as elements of higher culture" chivalric ideals "had to be ennobled and raised to the rank of virtue."[79] The process of ennoblement of chivalric and courtly idealism became closely entwined with the reverence for order which was part of the philosophical "realism" of prevailing thought.[80]

At a time when the social order was threatened by devastating disease including the Black Plague, by war, and by changing social and economic patterns,[81] an appearance of stability was carefully cultivated. Life within the walls of the castle was controlled at every turn by ritualistic rules of behaviour.[82] "Due to the tensions between the craving for stability and the fact of change, fifteenth-century society was competitive and fluid, yet wished to maintain respect of order and degree."[83] Courtesy, with its stress on precedence

---

[78] Huizinga, p. 30.
[79] Huizinga, p. 31.
[80] Huizinga, p. 217.
[81] M. Keen, England in the Later Middle Ages (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1973), pp. 169-225. Painter, pp. 11-16.
[82] A. Myers, The Household of Edward IV (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959).
[83] Myers, The Household of Edward IV, Introduction.

and respect for orderly behaviour was justified as another demonstration of respect for God's order as imitated in courtly life.

The treatise composed for Edward IV of England, based on household rules of Charles the Bold, Duke of Bourgogne, illustrates the lengths to which control and cataloguing of every minute detail of the rights and responsibilities of each level of society in court was taken. The king, queen, dukes, "banerettes or bachelor knyghtes," [84] on down the line are to expect certain stores, the right to be seated in the hall with the appropriate number of retainers and service according to their rank. A duke, for example, is allowed "1knyght, a chapleyn, iij esquyers, iiij yeomen; [85] and a "banerette" is allowed a "gentilman and a yoman."[86]

Reverence for order as it was applied to royal banquets is illustrated in a miniature depicting a king at table with four bishops (B.M. Royal MS. 14 E iv).[87] Fashionably dressed courtiers perform a ritual of serving the king and his four illustrious guests, parading solemnly past the table in a graceful pattern, taking care to place their feet securely, presumably to avoid the problem one courtier is having with the very long point of his shoe, to the chagrin of an elegantly gowned clerk. The king converses gravely with richly dressed bishops, whose gowns are trimmed with ermine.

---

[84] Myers, p. 94.
[85] Myers, p. 94.
[86] Myers, p. 106.
[87] Reproduced in W. E. Mead, The English Medieval Feast (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931), Frontispiece.

A crisp, white cloth covers the table on which servers have placed trenchers, plates and knives in front of each guest. Roast fowl and an elaborate concoction are among the dishes being offered. The total impression of the scene is formal, with respect for order.

King Richard II (1377-99) was noted for his love of books, dress and exotic food, tastes which set the fashion for his courtiers. Cookbooks which survive indicate a special interest in foreign wines and exotic spices, needed for the elaborate dishes which first appeared at Richard's court. The Forme of Cury (c.1377-99)[88] describes sauces made with pepper, ginger, cinnamon, cardamon, nutmeg and saffron, probably imported from Genoa and the Crimea. These rich and elaborate dishes, replaced roast meat as a favorite entrée and probably required the use of spoons.[89] Colour and shape became an important consideration in the preparation of food, making dishes a treat for the eye as well as for the palate. Three courses, the pôtage, the main course and a "sotilté", were consumed in a gracefully protracted ritual, probably starting between eleven and twelve o'clock and lasting until it was time for the afternoon Royal Audience, at Richard's court.[90]

---

[88] T. Austin, ed., Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books, c1450 (London: Trubner & Co., 1888), p. viii. The earliest manuscript is c.1430-40, but the Forme of Cury was compiled for Richard II (1377-99). See also W. Mead, pp. 50-51; Mathew, p. 23.

[89] Myers, The Household of Edward IV (b.1442-d.83), p. 169. "This sergeant endentythe with the thesaurer of householde for such plate of syluer or gold of salers, gilt sponys, and chaundelers. . . ."

[90] Mathew, The Court of Richard II, p. 30. William Mead

The visit of Charles IV, Holy Roman Emperor, to Paris in 1377-78 was the occasion for numerous banquets, one of which consisted of

> . . . roast capons and partridges, civet of hare, meat and fish aspics, lark pasties and rissoles of beef marrow, black puddings and sausages, lampreys and savory rice, entremet of swan, peacock, bitterns, and heron "borne on high," pasties of venison and small birds, fresh- and salt-water fish, with a gravy of shad "the color of peach blossom," white leeks with plovers, duck with roast chitterlings, stuffed pigs, eels reversed, frizzeled beans. . . fruit wafers, pears, comfits, medlars, peeled nuts, and spiced wine.'[11]

Entertainment during the lengthy meal was as elaborate as the occasion warranted and the host could provide, from instrumental music, singing, recitation, story-telling, sometimes with participation by the guests, to ingenious spectacles.'[12]

A feast held February 24, 1420, to honour the coronation of Catherine, queen of Henry V, is described in Fabyan's Chronicle. Catherine was led ceremoniously into the

---

[10] (cont'd)finds that the order of the courses varied in earlier times and that the dishes were not organized into 'courses' at first, a sweet, for example, being offered in the middle of the meal. Gradually the soup, fish, meat, sweet convention became the accepted order. See Mead, pp. 155-160.

[11] Cited by B. Tuchman, A Distant Mirror, The Calamitous Fourteenth Century (New York: Ballantine Books, 1978), p. 310.

[12] Guests sometimes sang songs at the table, according to Alexander Barclay,(Fourth Eclogue) or told tales like those in the Decameron. See Pierre J. B., Le Grand d'Aussy, Histoire de la vie privée des francais (Paris: 1815), III, 343.

great hall of Westminster and seated:

> . . . upon whose right hande satte, at the ende of the same table, the Archebysshop of Caunterbury, and Henry, surnamed the rych Cardynall of Wynchester; and upon the lefte hand of ye quene sat the Kyng of Scottes in his astate, ye which was servyd with coueryd messe lyke unto the forenamed bysshops, but after thym. And upon the same hande & syde, nere to the borde ende, sat the duchess of Yorke, and the countesse of Huntyngdon. The earle of the Marche, holdyng a ceptre in his hande, knelyd upon the right syde. The earle marshal in lyke maner knelyd upon the left hande of ye quene. The countesse of Kent sat under the table at the ryght foot, and the countess marshall at the left foot. The duke of Glouceter, Sir Humfrey, was that daye overloker, and stode before the quene bare hedyd. Sir Richarde Nevyll was that daye carver to the quene.'[33]

Rules of precedence, the importance of serving positions, such as carver and the respect granted ladies on such occasions are all evident in this passage. Although ladies found honour only through association with worthy fathers or husbands, they did command respect in ritual moments as further evidence of the noble's social standing and good taste, and even wielded personal power within their own households.'[34]

The respect for classification and order also shows up in the number of courtesy books written in the fifteenth century to help courtiers attend to their important duty of improving themselves through courtesy. As an example to

---

[33] R.Fabyan, The Chronicles of England and France [1516] edition, ed. Henry Ellis (London: F. C. and J. Rivington et al., 1811), p. 586.

[34] Jeanne de Montfort directed her household during a siege. See The Chronicle of Froissart, trans. Lord Berners, ed. W. E. Henley (London: Long Acre, 1901), I, 198-200.

others and as leaders dedicated to preserving moral and ethical excellence, the nobility, under the supervision of the lord and his lady at court, spent many hours improving themselves. Failure to practise good manners could suggest that an individual belonged to the lower class.

Christine de Pisan in Epitre d'Othéa describes the meaning of nobility and the need she sees for constant vigilence and training at court to supplement the natural tendencies of the well-born:

> A goodli knyght schulde not soile him in the broth of vilony; for liche as vilony may not suffre gentilnes, on the same wise gentilnes in himself may not suffre vilony, and nameli not to stryue ne to make debate with a persone vilonous of condicions, ne to speke outragiousli. Platon seith: He that ionyneth to his gentilnes nobles of good condicioius is to prayse, and he that holdeth him content with the gentilnes that cometh of his kynne with-oute addynge therto some good condiciouns scholde not be holden noble.'[15]

To help the aspiring young page in his task of learning the elements of courtesy, books were written with instructions on every aspect of service to nobles, on jousting, dancing and on social skills of every kind. Carving was a noble art which Wynkyn de Worde describes in his Boke of Kervinge.'[16] Pages were taught to serve dishes at

---

[15] Christine de Pisan, Epistle of Othéa, trans. Stephen Scrope, ed. Curt Buhler (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 32.

[16] F.Furnivall, ed., Early English Meals and Manners (London: Trubner, et al., 1868). Urbanitatis was at the court of Edward IV (reigned 1461-1470;1471-1483).

table, to act as cup-bearers and

> . . . besidez the bothe wardrobes, to wayte uppon and to kepe clene the kinges chambre, and most honest fro fautes of houndez as for other, and to help trusse and bere harneys, bloth, sackes, and other things necessary as they be comaunded by such as are abouen them.''

They were taught languages, hunting skills, the care of horses and armour, singing, dancing, debating courteously, playing instruments and manners for all occasions.

The Book of Courtesye, printed by William Caxton (c.1477-8), affirms the necessity for instruction and practise.'' Appearance, attention to one's proper place and pleasing attitudes toward superiors may be used for purposes of social advancement.'' Precedence and form are taken seriously but their usefulness as practical methods of maintaining the hierarchy while allowing an individual to rise in it is also recognized. Caxton and others in the fifteenth century give effort an important place as one of the steps to virtue. The aristocracy of the fifteenth century shows respect for both the old order and the new, rising middle class, as an increase in the number of courtesy books, written and printed, shows.'''

'' Myers, p. 120.

'' William Caxton, The Book of Curtesye, printed at Westminster circa 1477-8, ed. F. J. Furnivall (London: Trubner et al., 1868).

'' Myers, p. 2.

''' Bornstein, p. 85, notes that "the orders of knighthood increased in numbers, pomp and pretentions; knighting ceremonies became more elaborate; the demand for chivalric literature grew; and the tournament reached its most ornate stage, its military aspect being totally overshadowed by its decorative features."

Sidney Painter suggests that the medieval meaning of courtesy developed along with rules governing behaviour in tournaments.[101] The search for renown, which the chivalrous knight was encouraged to believe was his chief reason for existence, was translated, in the courtly milieu, into a desire to create or be part of the most brilliant, cultured society ever seen. Tournaments became the stage on which the knight paraded his proofs of prowess.[102] Expensive, colorful materials, the glitter of gold and jewels added to the triumph of victory in the lists. Chaucer's description of the tournament in which Arcite is mortally wounded is an example:

> Ther maystow seen devisynge of harneys
> So unkouth and so riche, and wrought so weel
> Of goldsmythrye, of browdynge, and of steel,
> The sheeldes brighte, testeres, and
> trappeurs,
> Gold-hewn helmes, hauberkes, cote-armures,
> Lordes in parementez on hir
> courseres . . . .[103]

Early tournaments were war games with few rules of conduct. The mêlée continued to be a timed, miniature war, strongly condemned by the church and prohibited in 1220, 1228, 1234, 1255 and 1299.[104] In 1242 Henry III forbade his nobles to have a Round Table while he was absent. Philip Augustus made his sons, Robert and Louis, promise not to take part in

---

[101] Painter, p. 45.

[102] Huizinga, pp. 68-9. Bornstein, p. 99.

[103] Chaucer, Knight's Tale, ll. 2496-2501.

[104] R. Clephan, The Tournament: Its Periods and Phases (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1919), p. 14. Ruth Cline, "The Influence of the Romances on Tournaments of the Middle Ages," Speculum, 20 (1945), 204-211.

tournaments.[105] Sixty warriors were killed in a tournament held at Neuss, near Cologne, in 1240.[106]

War games and, later, tournaments were responsible for the development of armour, which allowed young men to train for war in relative safety. Strict rules were devised for the same reason, to control the enthusiasm of the participants and to mitigate the consequences of zealous practise of games. Jousting became more popular than the dangerous mêlée and gradually replaced it. Tables Ronds are mentioned in 1235 (Hesdin, in Flanders), 1252 (Wallenden), 1279 (Kenilworth), 1344 (Edward III, Order of the Garter) and in 1389.[107] The games in Round Table tournaments were similar to those of any other tournament, but more ceremony was employed and hospitality was offered to all invited participants.[108]

In 1344 King Edward III called a Round Table which was announced in France, Scotland, Burgundy, Hainault, Flanders, Brabant and the German Empire. The number of tenans or defenders of the pas was fixed at forty of the best warriors in England. The tenans often fought under the names of Round Table knights.[109]

---

[105] Cline, p. 206.
[106] Clephan, p. 11.
[107] Cline, pp. 204-211.
[108] Anthony W. Annuziata, "The Pas d'Armes and its Occurrences in Malory," in Chivalric Literature, eds. Larry Benson and John Leyerle (Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1980), p. 39, says that a Round Table signified a combination of ritual fighting and feasting sponsored by a king or great lord of regal status and was usually held in imitation of one of the chief festivals of Arthurian romance.
[109] The actual wooden table in Winchester has 'Sir

After the fourteenth century, spectacles similar to Round Tables were called pas d'armes, and imitations of Arthurian adventures became ever more elaborate. Sponsored by a knight, not necessarily a king, a pas d'armes was open to all challengers. The rules were detailed and the entertainment following was lavish. Fountains, dwarfs, shields hanging on a "tree of chivalry," giants and other special effects from romance tales created colour and excitement.

In 1443, at l'Arbre de Charlemagne, near Dijon, the Duke Phillipe le Bon held a well-documented pas d'armes.''° Two shields were suspended in the lists. One was painted black with gilt tear-drops, the other violet with black tear-drops. Each challenger placed a token or "gage" below a shield. If he chose the black shield the owner of the gage must challenge a defender of the pas to run twelve courses along the tilt. Early jousts had been simple affairs with combatants running toward each other with lances. To reduce the danger of collisions a "tilt" or rope was hung with drapery along the middle of the lists to give direction. Later still a wooden barrier separated the horses which were often blindfolded.''' In the pas d'armes of 1443 the

---

''° (cont'd)Galehos' inscribed on it. The description of the table is in the Issue Roll of the Exchequer, Mich. 30, Edward III, cited in R. C. Clephan, The Tournament, p. 4.

''° Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur L'Histoire de France, ed. J. A. C. Buchon (Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876), pp. 376-392.

''' Clephan, p. 39.

challenger could choose sharp or rebated lances and, if unhorsed, he was required to present a diamond to his opponent.

Pageants, parades with "engines," music, dancing, colourful costumes and games of skill, not all related to war games, were added for the pleasure of the audience and participants, as the love for ceremony and display characteristic of the fifteenth century changed the nature of the games from simple training exercises to a lavish display of practised skills presented for a large, mixed audience.'[112] In a game called the "baston course" no personal injury was intended, the object being to knock off the crest which decorated the helm of each contestant.'[113] The crest was regarded as the repository of family and personal pride and the helm represented dread of shame, according to a popular treatise originally written about 1276 by Ramon Lull, the Libre del Orde de Cavayleria. This treatise was translated in 1456 by Sir Gilbert Hay as the Buke of Knychhede, and in 1484 by William Caxton who called it the Book of the Ordre of Chyualry.'[114]

---

[112] Huizinga, p. 19.

[113] Clephan, p. 41.

[114] Huizinga, pp. 211-12. "To the men of the middle ages the coat of arms was undoubtedly more than a matter of vanity or of genealogical interest. Heraldic figures in their minds acquired a value almost like that of a totem. Whole complexes of pride and ambition, of loyalty and devotion, were condensed in the symbols of lions, lilies or crosses, ... " Bornstein, p. 105, says the costumes, crests, coats-of-arms helped spectators identify performers in spectacles which often had an allegorical theme.

Imaginative crests such as those appearing in illustrations of Cour d'Amour d'Epris de René d'Anjou had symbolic significance. Courreux, for example, wears three thistles (trois planctes de chardon piquans) with a branch of black pine across the helm. On top of the greenery an artificially-made head of a golden dragon breathes fire "par grant déspit." In the same illustration Coeur has greenery across his helm which is "timbré de fleurs d'amoureuses pensées." On top of this a "large," "pure," and "noble" red heart with three forget-me-nots is supported by gilded wings meant to represent "doloreux souspirs," that is ardent, or painful desire.''[15] A well known illustration of a tournament has been compared with this illustration from literature, particularly in details of the stance of the adversaries and the way the drapery of the horses' covering flows with the movement depicted:

> Les attitudes des combattants, le mouvement du caparaçon du cheval de Courreux, rapellent précisément la joute du Livre des Tournois.''[16]

Caxton has described the colorful preparations in 1390 for a royal joust which began with a parade through the streets of London:

> All of the King's hous were of one sute, theyr cotys, theyr armys, theyr sheldes and theyr trappours were embrowdred all with

---

[15] René d'Anjou, Le Coeur d'Amour d'Epris, eds. M. T. Gousset, D. Poirion, F. Unter Kircher (Vesoul: Phillippe Lebaud, 1981), pp. 16,60.

[16] 1. Paris, Bibliotech Nationale, ms. fr. 2695, ff. 45 Y46. René d'Anjou, Le Coeur d'Amour d'Epris, p. 60.

> whyte hertis, with crownes of gold about their necks, and cheynes of gold hangyng thereon; which hertys were the King's levery, that he gaf to lordes, ladyes, knyghtes, and squyers, to know his houshold peple from other; then four and twenty ladyes comynge to the justys, ladde four and twenty lordes with chynes of gold, and alle in the same sute of hertes as is afore sayd, from the Tour on horsback thrurgh the cyte of London into Smythfeld.'''

Jousting was often combined with masques, mummeries and pageants in the fifteenth century. Philip, Duke of Burgundy, in 1453, arranged a series of entertainments for his nephew, the Duke of Clèves. During the inaugural banquet a beautiful girl entered the hall bearing a chaplet of flowers which she placed on the duke's head, indicating that he would sponsor the entertainment. The next day the Duke offered to joust with lances, at Lille, in the marketplace. On his way to the marketplace he was preceded through the streets by a swan the size of a horse which was flanked by "two savages." The festivities continued in like fashion with a series of displays and tournaments.''' De la Marche described the marriage of Margaret of York, sister of King Edward IV of England to Charles, Duke of Burgundy, in 1468 where an elaborate ceremony, pageant and tournament amazed those present. A gilded fir tree in the centre of the lists gave its name, l'arbre d'or, to the fête.'''

''' Cited by Clephan, p. 35. Holinshed's version is less effusive. See Holinshed Chronicles, ed. Stephan Booth (San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1968), 2, 810-11.

''' Clephan, p. 75.

''' "Mémoires de la Marche," in Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires, pp. 536-69.

The extremes to which ceremonies extended were an example of the mechanical proliferation of customs which alarmed the church. For example:

> A special office was instituted for every detail of the worship of the Virgin Mary. There were particular masses, afterwards abolished by the church, in honour of the piety of Mary, of her seven sorrows,of all her festivals taken collectively, of her sisters--the other two Marys--of the archangel Gabriel, of all the saints of our Lord's genealogy.'[120]

Popular customs had a tendency to obscure the meaning behind the form, just as the line between sacred and profane blurred. Tournaments were regarded with awe, participants paying careful attention to behaviour and dress, while Deschamps complains that behaviour in church lacks proper respect for the mysteries:

> On souloit estre ou temps passé
> En l'église benignement,
> A genoux en humilité
> Delez l'autel moult closement,
> Tout nu le chief piteusement,
> Maiz au jour d'uy, si come beste,
> On vient a l'autel bien souvent
> Chaperon et chapel en teste.'[121]

Huizinga notes that monuments were erected on the sites of famous combats, such as the Pélerine Cross near Saint Omer in remembrance of the Passage of Arms of the Pélerine and of the exploits of the bastard of Saint Pol and a Spanish knight. Bayard piously went to visit this cross, as if on a pilgrimage.'[122] Chaucer's Wife of Bath treats pilgrimages as

---

[120] Huizinga, p. 138.
[121] Eustace Deschamps, cited by Huizinga, p. 143.
[122] Huizinga, pp. 71-72.

travel adventures and admits that in her younger days romantic dalliance was a reason for attending church festivals.[123]

Despite the misunderstandings of unworthy individuals and a lack of Christian understanding, especially among the lower classes who were believed to be in need of a good example to follow, the nobility tried to live up to a Christian ideal. The membership of an order of chivalry constituted a sacred and exclusive tie, with "aspirations of . . . the very highest ethical and political idealism."[124] This idealism was expressed in the ritual behaviour of court life.

Medieval idealism, for which the philosophers used the term realism,[125] was founded on the belief that God's plan ordained the hierarchic order of all objects, sensible and insensible. Every object or body reflected a part of the Divine plan and therefore achieved an aura of importance from this direct connection with God. Reverence for God's order, which provided a reflection of His concern for mankind, was expressed in ritual celebrations of every piece of evidence revealed to the understanding of man. The danger of medieval idealism was that the object and the ritual became important in themselves and the underlying meaning was in danger of being forgotten. However, if rituals pay homage to important beliefs, even if they have become

---

[123] G. Chaucer, Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, ll. 555-561.

[124] Huizinga, p. 75.

[125] Huizinga, p. 195.

fossilized to some extent, the code of behaviour called courtesy contains higher aspirations than simply a love of pomp and ceremony. The courteous qualities of loyalty and the keeping of oaths were traditional virtues admired for their usefulness to the smooth organization of the feudal system.'[26] Mutual obligations of lord and vassal, and in a later period, of lord and retainers, provided the foundation of the society, so that reliance on the honesty of each party was a binding force. A traitor, or one who did not keep his word, was viewed with horror and punished severely.'[27] Combined with obligations of a social nature, generosity and sharing, a ritual developed which dramatized the mutual obligations of vassal and lord. Generosity, an admired feudal virtue, was absolutely essential to the display of courtesy.'[28]

Welcome and hospitality followed a rigid pattern in medieval castles, reflecting, in the strict adherence to rules of conduct, the trust that host and guest placed in one another.'[29] Formal, immediate recognition of an equal in status, a wish for health and happiness in the name of God and a ritual baiser were some of the rules. On arrival, the guest was helped off his mount, provided with a clean, warm

---

'[26] Painter, pp. 40-41. Huizinga, pp. 77-81.

'[27] Dupin, p. 37.

'[28] Dupin, Chapter VIII. Margaret Greaves, The Blazon of Honour, A Study in Renaissance Magnanimity (London: Methuen, 1964), pp. 59-60. G. G. Coulton, Chaucer and His England (London: Methuen, 1952), p. 174.

'[29] Dupin, p. 26. Chastelain, Choix de Chroniques, p. 645.

robe and led by the hand, by his host, to a guest room.[130] Le congé, or farewell, was as stylized as le salut.

It was believed that a noble character was capable of extreme sensibility and appreciation for beauty. La joie, a counterbalance for sorrow and misery, was sought after at court as evidence of a noble nature, one capable of finer feelings.[131] Moderation, or la mesure, was prized as proof of the self-control that comes with maturity.[132] In a society where men were "always running to extremes,"[133] the ruling class was supposed to possess la mesure as a good example. Dupin summarizes the rules for courteous behaviour and the qualities which the rules encouraged:

> . . . observation du salut, du baiser, et du congé, pratique de l'accueil et de l'hospitalité, loyauté, et fidelité, bonté et pitié, douceur, liberalité et largesse, joie, souci de la renommée, mesure, amour et, dans cet amour même, applications des vertus courtoises, tels sont, croyons-nous, les éléments, tous les éléments, de la courtoisie. . . .[134]

Evidence of application of these qualities and adherence to the rules can be found in the ceremonies, rituals and

---

[130] See Tuchman, p. 235, for a description of pleasures provided for guests. See also Sir Gawayne: A collection of Ancient Romance-Poems, ed. F. Madden (London: Richard and John Taylor, 1971), p. 12, ll. 250 ff. "Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche," from Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires, pp. 488-500. Courtesy Books like Christine de Pisan's The Book of Fayttes of Armes and Chyvalrye (1363-1431), and John Lyly's Euphues (1554-1606) include rules for washing of hands before and after meals and the proper etiquette at table.

[131] Dupin, Chapter IX. Huizinga, p. 174.

[132] Dupin, Chapter XI.

[133] Huizinga, p. 18.

[134] Dupin, p. 128.

religious observances of the period. Appearance illustrated reality in the Middle Ages.[135]

Courtesy was more than just polite conduct, it was an important form of communication for the ruling class. An expression of the idealism which was closely related to chivalric virtues, the development in meaning of "curtesy," as Malory often spelled it, was influenced by feudal chivalry, Christianity and courtly love.

The large number of Courtesy Books which were written in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries provide an indication of the importance of rules and reflect the fifteenth -century concern for ethics. The early manuals, military rule books of a practical nature, were extended in the later Middle Ages to include ethical considerations of a knight, such as mercy and truthfulness.[136] Loyalty, generosity and prowess, long admired by the feudal knight, received spiritual direction and some justification from the Church, when modified by mercy, obedience, worship of God and protection of the helpless. Courteous speech, moderation and a serious attitude toward the calling of the soldier, the protector of justice, were additions to courtesy which Caxton believed were important in the fifteenth century.[137] Idealistic, romantic love became a virtue of courtesy, starting with the flowering of troubadour art, in the late

---

[135] D. S. Brewer, "Courtesy and the Gawain Poet," in Patterns of Love and Courtesy, ed. J. Lawlor (London: Edward Arnold, 1966), p. 61.

[136] Pisan, The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye (1489), pp. 248, 259.

[137] Pisan, Fayttes of Armes, p. 291.

twelfth century. Although it developed into a stylized game, courtly love influenced behaviour and gave the lady a new, important role in society, as her knight's source of inspiration, through love.'[38]

Social changes as feudalism declined in the later Middle Ages encouraged indulgence in luxury items at increasingly elaborate courts. Food, dress and entertainment became lavish indications of the power possessed by the noble. Among the games which accompanied feasting and ceremonial occasions, the tournament stands out as an influence on the development of the courtesy associated with chivalric pursuits. Music, dancing, singing, literature and pageants also took on a new role as suitable amusements for warriors aspiring to become accomplished in "noble" pursuits. Medieval idealism and formalism lie behind the need to show forth beliefs in a dramatic display of reverence for the plenitude and order of God's universe.

Courtesy, as Dupin describes it in Courtoisie au Moyen Age, was an inner quality which influenced behaviour and courteous behaviour was an indication of class.'[39] It was possible to descend to the level of the vilain, even if noble by birth, if care were not taken by the noble to

---

[38] D. Sands, Middle English Verse Romances (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), p. 223. Quene Gwenere accuses Sir Launfal of lacking prowess and courtesy: "Thow lovist no woman ne no woman the
Thou were worthy forelore!" Sir Launfal, ll. 689-90.

[39] Vilain had the opposite meaning of courtois. A vilain was low-born. The perjorative meaning was attached because it was believed that lower class people were incapable of high thoughts or inspiration through ideals. Dupin, Chapter II.

maintain his sacred obligation of improving the quality of life through the promotion of courtesy. For this reason knights trained seriously for their calling and courts were schools for courtesy.'[40]

Malory's use of courtesy in Morte Darthur [41] to define an ideal which he believes will inspire justice and peace for a united England extends the meaning of the word beyond the simple description of good manners it usually contains. In his tale of the greatest English king, Malory demonstrates, through the actions of King Arthur, ideal behaviour for a ruler. Arthur becomes one of the Nine Worthies because of his devotion to the duties of a Christian leader. Advancing beyond the virtues of a great knight, he takes care to retain a devotion for courage, loyalty and knightly service to ladies as an example, showing leadership qualities as well in the unselfish advancement of his knights through recognition of renown and in his vision of greatness for his nation. Moderation and a sense of fairness are especially marked in the courtesy of rulers.

The courtesy of knights displayed by Arthur's followers is most highly developed in Lancelot. Recognizing his limitations as a sinful man, Lancelot strives to be as loyal, brave, generous, kind and God-fearing as he can,

---

[40] Antoine de la Salle, Le Petit Johan de Saintré (1386-1462), trans. Irvine Gray (London: George Routledge, 1931).

[41] All citations refer to the second edition of Eugene Vinaver, The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, 3 Vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

gaining the greatest renown of all the knights. Galahad represents the purely spiritual aspects of courtesy, and his presence at Arthur's court proves that courtesy, the quality which differentiates the society of Round Table knights from any other, is divinely inspired. Once Galahad has presented his message of hope to the greatest court in England, he returns to his Father in heaven. Malory does not advocate a purely spiritual approach to the world's problems; he provides an ideal which he believes to be practical and effective. The special aspects of the courtesy of rulers, the courtesy of secular knights and the courtesy of Christians provide a complete picture of Malory's intended revelation of the need for a ruling class which aspires to improve society in imitation of an ideal. The code devised at the court of King Arthur is inadequate to control the iniquities with which it is faced, but Malory makes a great attempt to show what may be done. King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table have become a legend because, in Morte Darthur, their ideals represent the yearning of every society to achieve more than material success.

II. The Courtesy of Rulers

Famous as the type of Christian king, one of the Nine Worthies,[1] Malory's King Arthur rules over a courtly society which encourages a blend of romantic chivalric ideals with Christian morality. Courtesy reaches a peak of achievement under his leadership, and the fame he achieves as leader of an illustrious court is legendary.[2] A "romantic hero in a 'historical' context,"[3] King Arthur is the greatest English king by virtue of his noble origins, his pre-ordained selection, which is acknowleged by the English people and his unusual wisdom which grows with experience under the tutelage of Merlin. Reflections of the mythic hero attend the mystery surrounding the circumstances of Arthur's birth. Details are orchestrated by Merlin, the Magician, while Igraine and Uther Pendragon, a powerful king, provide suitably noble origins for the ideal leader of England in

---

[1] W. Crotch, ed., The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 92. R. H. Hanning, The Vision of History in Early Britain (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966), p. 83. J. Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought and Art in France and the Netherlands in the XIVth and XVth Centuries (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1927), p. 61.

[2] Acton Griscom, ed., The Historia Regum Britanniae of Geoffrey of Monmouth, trans. R. E. Jones (London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1929), pp. 438 ff. R. S. Loomis, Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), pp. 54 ff. John Rhys, Studies in the Arthurian Legend (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891), pp. 6-8.

[3] Muriel Whitaker, "Allegorical Imagery in Malory's 'Tale of the Noble King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius,'" Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 74 (1973), 496.

its Golden Age.[4]

Raised in obscurity by Sir Ector, who is chosen by Merlin for his task, the youth, at fifteen, innocently removes a magic sword from a stone in the churchyard, a feat no great king or noble has been able to accomplish. Supernatural assistance provided by Merlin, later by Nineve, controls the direction of his life as he wins battles against unruly kings, bringing order to a troubled land, aided by his sword, Excalibur. The young hero receives support from Merlin in early battles, benefiting from his master's ability to see into the future. [5] For example, through the "wytte of Merlin," the battle of the eleven kings concludes victoriously, after providing Arthur with an opportunity to do "so mervaylesly in armys that all men had wondir" (p. 29). In this battle good knights display the virtues of chivalric courtesy, shown by Malory to be admirable but limited. Extension of chivalric ideals is encouraged by Merlin whose task is to protect the fore-ordained king of a Golden Age in England until he understands his mission and is capable of leading a new society dedicated to justice and brotherhood and conforming to the aims of an ideal realized in the code of courtesy. King Arthur has inborn traits related to his noble origins, traits which reveal him as courageous, merciful, loyal, and

---

[4] D. S. Brewer, "The hoole book," in Essays on Malory, ed. J. Bennett, pp. 47-49. E. K. Chambers, Arthur of Britain (Cambridge: Speculum Historale, 1964), p. 232.

[5] Eugene Vinaver, ed., The Works of Sir Thomas Malory, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), pp. 19-20; hereafter cited by page number only following the quotation.

kind and he is sensitive to both the pleasures and the distress of others. With experience and instruction he learns moderation, generosity, hospitality and appreciation of ritual. Arthur shows unwavering devotion to the principles of Christian justice and to the improvement of his society as an example for the world to follow.

Arthur's chivalric courage, symbolized by his shield that "was so blody" no man might know him (p. 34) and proved by his daring replacement of King Ban's horse, is natural to him and is accepted as one of the special virtues of this noble king. Arthur also shows an early inclination to express "grete pite" and responsibility for his companion, is fiercely protective of his friends and "passynge wrothe" (p. 35), or determined to uphold his ideas, when faced with an opponent who would destroy him. Arthur, Ban and Bors "com into the thycke of the press . . . and slew down ryght on bothe hondis, that hir horses wente in blood up to the fittlockys" (p. 36), Malory says. The eleven kings are shown to be worthy opponents; even King Arthur "preysed them much for their noble chere of chevelry" (p. 35). Malory first indicates the traditional chivalric virtues of courage, loyalty, nobility and skill in battle which the historic Arthur possesses and then suggests the limitations of such behaviour.

The qualities which set courtesy apart from traditonal chivalric behaviour are introduced in Morte Darthur by God's agent, Merlin. Courtesy is not only based on Christian

virtues in this tale, it is divinely inspired. Arthur's great courage, loyalty, pity, noble demeanour and determination to lead prove Arthur is worthy to be king but the strengths of courteous behaviour, such as moderation, or mesure, must be demonstrated by Merlin, the teacher. In a strongly worded rebuke, Merlin stops the unnecessary bloodshed caused by enjoyment of battle. Knowing that the time has not come for the eleven kings to be defeated, he announces that unnecessary slaughter will be punished by God. "And thou tary on them ony lenger thy fortune woll turne and they shall encres" (p. 36), he warns. Arthur's enthusiasm for adventurous foreign wars must be controlled by his advisors, who remind him that he has "much to do yet in thys londe" (p. 39). Moderation, lacking in the youthful king, is the first important lesson in the courtesy of rulers which Arthur learns.

Generosity is another duty Merlin reminds Arthur to respect. A courteous king rewards his knights "with golde and with sylver" (p. 36). King Arthur later becomes famous for his generosity, but as a young man he needs to be reminded of his responsibility toward others. Prowess in his knights must also be acknowleged by a courteous ruler. Merlin, himself, visits his master Blaise so that he may record the great deeds of worthy knights. Arthur learns this lesson well and formal recognition of prowess becomes a feature of his court, leading to reciprocal fame for the king who directs the Round Table knights. A king's duty to

increase the fame of his knights, for their sake as well as for his own, is raised to the height of a sacred trust by Malory's choice of Merlin as teacher for King Arthur. Arthur possesses characteristics of a hero, but Malory suggests that a new extension of virtues is part of the great plan directed by Merlin. King Arthur's court quickly becomes famous for more than just riches and strong knights. At the height of his reign Arthur remains at court, directing the actions of his knights as they administer justice. Conquered opponents, on command, appear before King Arthur to bear witness to the worth of the Round Table knight who has defeated them, King Arthur's worth increasing as a result of the exploits of his knights. A courteous ruler is responsible for the well-being of his people and controls the administration of justice.

In his youth, King Arthur shows unusual talent for many of the virtues of courtesy. An ability to enjoy the pleasures of life, especially in communication with others comes naturally to Arthur, who enjoys the trick Merlin plays on him when Merlin, dressed as a churl in "black shepis skynnes, and a grete payre of bootis" (p. 38), demands a gift for knowledge of buried treasure. Ulphans and Brastias, Ban and Bors, join in the general merriment at Arthur's expense. La joie is essential to courteous behaviour.[4]

In this spirit Arthur enters into a light romance with a damsel named Lyonors and then another with King Lot's wife

---

[4] Dupin, p. 78.

which, unfortunately, has serious consequences. Malory stresses adultery more than incest in this incident and Arthur is made responsible for lacking good judgement. Arthur "knew nat [that] kynge Lottis wyff was his sister" (p. 41) but he did know that he was committing adultery, one of the sins which occurs frequently in Morte Darthur and which is a precipitating factor in the destruction of the realm. Courtesy, perhaps because of its courtly love influences, is not a sufficiently strong code in itself to overcome the destructive tendencies of man. Portents and dreams of disaster follow this event closely, suggesting the importance of this natural but dangerous inability of the young king to recognize the source of his doom.

An adventure which has suggestions of an Otherworld encounter occurs because the king is "passynge hevy" (p. 41) of his dream and decides to go hunting to clear his head. While chasing a hart,[7] Arthur comes in contact with the Questing Beast. Merlin appears to him in disguise as he sits in "grete thought" (p. 42) beside a fountain. The disguises which Merlin uses are reminiscent of magic and suggest his Otherworld characteristics.[8] When he is rejected in the guise of a young child who gives Arthur knowledge of his

---

[7] Albert Pauphilet, Etudes sur la Queste del Saint Graal (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1968), p. 109. Howard Patch, The Other World, According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), p. 52.

[8] Merlin says, "I was conceived of the deuell," and "I have not loste the knowynge of here engynes," cited in Merlin or the Early History of King Arthur: A Prose Romance, ed. Henry Wheatley (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1899), I, 22.

miraculous birth, Merlin switches immediately to the shape of an old man. The old man warns that "God ys displesed" with Arthur because of his irresponsible behaviour and that Mordred, the son born of Lot's wife, will destroy him. His death, however, will be a "worshipfull dethe" (p. 44). This incident, with its suggestions of another time scheme, represents Arthur's period of growing up, his acceptance of the past and his recognition of the special place in history which he holds.

He asks for proof and still more proof of his past, sending for Igraine, his mother. He says "if she sy so hirselff, than will I believe it" (p. 45). Proof is provided and Arthur accepts his mother in an emotional scene in which he shows his noble sensitivity.' Arthur's discovery that his mother is the noble Igraine, wife of king Uther, is shocking enough but he must now face the fact that he has committed incest, although this is not stressed in Malory's Morte Darthur.

Arthur is now known to be courageous, noble and aware of his potential. At this stage, he is still concerned about knightly prowess and thinks more of the injury his friend has recently suffered in a duel than of the duties of a king. Arthur personally challenges his friend Gryfflet's opponent, Pellinor, proving that the king is brave but not cautious, since Merlin has warned him that Pellinor is strong. As a king, Arthur should take more care. He loses

---

' Dupin, pp. 49-50.

Excalibur in this adventure but his guide, Merlin, remains close by to give assistance. The sword is replaced by one given to Arthur by the Lady of the Lake, showing that he is forgiven for his youthful hastiness, even when he offers to challenge Pellinor once again with his new sword. Merlin sternly forbids this action but makes his advice palatable by saying that no worship can be gained by fighting a weary knight. Arthur's bravery is admired at court, when he returns, but "men of worship" at Camelot "mervayled that he wolde jouparde his person so alone" (p. 54). They are glad, just the same, to have a "chyfftayne" who enjoys knightly adventures. Arthur has all the qualities admired by chivalric knights and is able to learn further from Merlin, who teaches responsibility, mesure, generosity and a sense of purpose fitting for the king who is destined to become head of a court famous for courtesy.

After Arthur has set up his court, Guenevere has accepted her position as queen, and two great knights, Lancelot and Tristram have joined the Round Table, the "moste party of his enemyes" (p. 185) are brought under control, making the repeated challenge delivered by messengers from Rome especially impudent. When messengers arrive from Rome demanding "truage," he shows mercy--"therefore ye may sey what ye woll" (p. 48)-- but he does not consider yielding to their demands. Instead he issues an impetuous challenge to meet with the Emperor on the battlefield, a message the twelve knights from Rome take

back to the Emperor without tarrying to show their astonishment over the wealth of Arthur's court. Arthur's regal rage is in character for the mature king, who puts forth all his magnificence to impress his challengers as he sees the need for a major war of conquest. This time, seven days are allotted for a decision and his barons are consulted. In the meantime, the hospitality of Arthur's court overwhelms the visitors. They are "served with the beste" and "no deyntes spared," "for they ar full royall peple." Arthur is careful to "remembir on oure worshyp" and he uses the royal "we" (p. 187). Safe passage is guaranteed for the messengers on their return. The Emperor learns from them that Arthur believes that he should be Emperour, because Lucius has "occupyed the Empyre with grete wronge, for all his trew auncettryes sauff his fadir Uther were Emperoures of Rome" (p. 192). Testimony that Arthur is regal, commands nine kings and a fair "felyship of knyghtes" and is wise and fair of speech, reinforces the evidence that he has progressed to maturity as the "royallyst kynge that lyvyth on erthe" (p. 192).

The contrast with his earlier confrontation with the Roman senators reflects changes in Arthur's understanding of his responsibilities as a king. Arthur is not only predestined to be king and heroic by nature, he is able to learn and to adapt his policies to suit the situation.

Merlin is no longer present to help control, through supernatural means, the predestined events of Arthur's life,

nor is he needed. Arthur, supported by his noble knights Cador,[10] Kay, Bedivere, Tristram, Lancelot and Gawain, proves in a duel and in the great war with Rome that he controls his life and the lives of others with mesure and a sense of the future of the nation. Supernatural help for Arthur ceases once he reaches his full potential as a king. Magic is replaced by mundane statesmanship following the two great demonstrations of Arthur's magnificence, the battle with the giant of Mount Saint Michael and the war with the Emperor Lucius, not surfacing again until the end of Arthur's life, when he is taken to Avalon in a "lytll barge wyth many fayre ladyes in hit" (p. 1240).

The two great instances of proof that Arthur has divine sanction and that the courtly life he upholds as a Christian ruler is meant to improve society are his single combat with the giant and his war with the misguided Emperor. On his way to meet the Emperor Lucius, Arthur has a marvellous dream depicting the confrontation of a bear with a dragon. Philosophers assure Arthur that his forthcoming battle is a just one, the "beare, all blak, in a clowde," representing "som tyraunte that turmentis thy peple, other thou art lyke to fyght with som gyaunt boldely in batayle be thyself alone" (p. 197). The dream is fulfilled in both senses as Arthur meets evil, personified.[11]

---

[10] "Cador, son of Cornuayle, that was at the tyme called Constantyne, that aftir was kynge after Arthurs dayes" (p. 195).

[11] Of the giant of Mount Saint Michael, Professor Whitaker says he, in death as in life, "defiles the scene in much the same way as the devils in the milieu of the Grail

He aids a captured duchess and a "carefull wydow" (p. 200), releases the land from a tyrant and avenges the Christian martyrs created by the giant. Showing courage and grim humour, Arthur insists on fighting the giant alone.'[12] He modestly tells a widow he comes from the noble conqueror, Sir Arthur, and shows pity and gratitude to God for his victory.

The battle with the giant and the struggle for the crown of Rome reach miraculous proportions, the setting for the fight on the mountain suggesting an Otherworld encounter. The "creste of the cragge," the "colde wynde," "welle-stremys" and "fyres flamand full hyghe" (p. 200) provide a threatening atmosphere, suitable for a giant who feasts by "gnawyng on a lymme of a large man," in anticipation of the course to follow, which is "twelve chyldir but late borne" (p. 202). King Arthur is incensed over the murder of "Chrysten chyldern" and challenges the giant who is "fro hede to the foote fyve fadom long and large" (p. 203). The giant is likened to a "devil in helle," a "grayhounde" and called a "doggys son," the animal imagery emphasizing his actions. The "gloton gloored and grevid full foule," "sturdely he sterte uppon his leggis" and "caught a clubbe in his honde" (p. 202). He "swappis at the kynge" and "cruysshed downe" with the club, while he "shappis at sir Arthure" (p. 203). He finally throws away his weapons and

---

'[11] (cont'd)quest" ("Allegorical Imagery"), p. 501.

'[12] He says, "for I wol seche this seynte be myself alone" (p. 200).

catches the king in his arms with a bear-hug. The king's cool humour contrasts sharply with the animal savagery of the giant,'[13] as Arthur, clasped in his arms, reassures Sir Kay, who is watching in horror, saying, "this corseynte have I clegged oute of the yondir clowys" (p. 204). The good King Arthur distributes the giant's wealth impartially arranging, in gratitude, commemoration of the event by dedicating a church to Saint Michael.

Arthur's growing importance as a Christian leader, recognized by the entire Christian world,'[14] is emphasized as he rescues "Dowse Fraunce" (p. 205) from the cruel invader Lucius, during his advance toward Rome.'[15] His right to power is carefully underlined by the attitude of the inhabitants whom he encounters. A husbandman, a widow and the marshal of France, all plead for help, which is generously given. The wickedness of opponents and their pride contrast with the courage and the courtesy of Arthur's knights. The fight with the Emperor Lucius who recruits giants from Gene, the place of origin of the giant of Mount Saint Michael, has exaggerated violence similar to that of the battle with the giant and, on a knightly level, contrasts Arthur's courteous

---

[13] P. C. Field, Romance and Chronicle (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1971), p. 109.

[14] Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia, p. 438.

[15] A change from the source; see Vinaver, Works, pp. 1369,1405; also, Mary Dichmann, "The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius: The Rise of Lancelot," in Malory's Originality, ed. R. M. Lumiansky (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 67-70; 79-86. Larry Benson, Malory's "Morte Darthur" (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 144. P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte" in Essays on Malory, ed. J. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 65.

men with the Saracens they encounter. Those who survive the righteous anger of Arthur's men "hyde there hedis" (p. 216) and, terrified, flee for safety. The greater number are "slayne adowne clene," as Arthur's "bourdlyest knyghtes that ever brake brede" rid the landscape of "tyranntes" and fiends (p. 214). Arthur shows pity for his own knights, and honours the noble dead among his opponents. A grand procession of elaborately prepared coffins, the only tribute Arthur will send Rome, is escorted by three senators whose lives have been spared so they may act as messengers, and witnesses, to the defeat of Lucius and the greatness of Arthur. Arthur's involvement in the war is forced on him by his need to challenge evil, not just for personal ambition or national glory.'[6]

Arthur's great courage is now seen to be based on the certainty that he is right and that he will be protected by God. Arthur's nephew Gawain is also aware that "the goodnesse of God" (p. 232) has given him his strength in this battle. As a Christian leader Arthur shows mercy and forgiveness, provides for widows and orphans, maintains law and order in conquered towns and accepts, gracefully, the offer of the Roman crown. All the senators "on lyve" and the "cunnyngst cardynallis" (p. 244) beg Arthur to allow them six weeks to prepare for his coronation in Rome "with crysemed hondys" and "septure," signs of the Emperor's

---

[6] A change from the source. See Vinaver, Works, p. 1369.
Also, Thomas Wright, "The Tale of King Arthur," from Malory's Originality, p. 62.

power. Arthur replies "I assente me . . . as ye have devysed." He will accept the rents as his due to "kepe my Rounde Table" and will return to England as he pleases (pp. 244-5). Arthur is generous with his knights and the people of France, but still brings back "rychesse," a sign of God's favour, to his own court.

Courtesy acquires new dimensions during the struggle in which Arthur gains control over large armies and mythic enemies. As his fame increases, his control over his subjects increases in matters of generosity, pity, service to ladies, mesure and a kindly joie, those fine additions which differentiate chivalric duty from the full complement of virtues called courtesy. From personal observance of the rules of courtesy, Arthur turns to conducting a large circle of noble knights in practice of the virtues which make his court an ideal example for others to follow.

King Arthur's attitude, uniformly kind, encouraging and protective toward strange young men who request the privilege of joining the Round Table, demonstrates his concern for increasing the renown of his courtly society as an example for others to follow. He shows superior judgement in character, generosity and hospitality which are unequalled at other courts. When Gareth asks to serve for a year in his kitchen, Sir Kay jumps to the conclusion that the young man is neither noble nor worthy of respect. Arthur, on the other hand, recognizes worth despite outward

appearances,'' showing willingness to rely on instinct or his own noble sensitivities and offering greater gifts than Gareth will accept. He treats Gareth as a "lordys sonne" (p. 294) and when he completes his trying quest successfully, Arthur honours him at a great tournament. The hospitality offered to a long list of guests on this occasion proves Arthur's generosity and indicates his love for virtuous young knights, whose opportunities to increase "worship" are of great concern to him.

Torre, a "fayre yonge man of eyghtene year of ayge" (p. 99), receives the same courteous reception when he arrives at court to request that Arthur make him a knight. Arthur has agreed to "gyff ony man the gyffte that he wolde aske" (p. 99), if it were reasonable, in celebration of his marriage to Guenevere. Although he rides a "lene mare" and his father is a cowherd, Torre shows signs of nobility, in his interests--"shotynge,""castynge dartes," watching "batayles" and beholding "knyghtes"-- and in his shape and "countenaunce" (p. 100). His real father is King Pellinor, a great noble, whose traits have been inherited by his son. It is Merlin who arranges to prove this point, as a lesson in the importance of noble blood, a prerequisite for courtesy. King Arthur makes Torre a knight, promising that he may earn a place at the Round Table if he is "of proues and worthynes" (p. 100). When Torre proves capable, "the kynge

---

'' He says, "myne herte gyvyth me to the gretly," a remark showing a noble discrimination related to <u>la mesure.</u> See Dupin, p. 87.

and the quene made grete joy." Arthur's judgement of potential proves correct, as Merlin promises that Torre "shall preve a noble knyght of proues as few lyvynge, and jantyll and cuteyse and of good tachys, and passyng trew of hys promyse, and never shall he outerage" (p. 114).

"Br[e]wnor le Noir," scornfully nicknamed "La Cote Male Tayle," by Sir Kay, is welcomed to court despite his strange appearance. His coat, although made from "ryche cloth of golde" and therefore indicative of noble status, fits him "overthwartely" (p. 459). The reason he wears the tattered coat is to fulfill his vow to avenge his father's cowardly murder. He wears the coat, worn by his father at the time of his murder, until he has completed this task. Left behind at court while Arthur goes hunting, the young man proves his worth and prowess by saving Guenevere from an escaped lion. Arthur, in gratitude, makes him a knight. Success in a hard adventure later makes him eligible to become a knight of the Round Table. King Arthur awards Brewnor "grete londis" in recognition of his service to the court (p. 476). The king's judgement of character, his generosity and hospitality and his recognition of youthful worth, create strong support for strange young knights. By his courteous actions in supporting young knights Arthur also arranges to recruit worthy young men to strengthen his Round Table and to replace fallen heroes.

King Arthur's relations with the young Lancelot provide another illustration of his concern to teach courtesy to

knights. When Sir Lancelot first comes to court, he is often "put to the worse on horseback" as he learns the lessons of chivalric games. With the help of King Arthur, Lancelot proves to be a knight who is "honoured of hyghe and lowe" (p. 287). In return all the "courte and Rounde Table is by sir Launcelot worshypped and amended, more than by ony knyght lyvynge" (p. 460). The reciprocal aspects of worship are noticeable here. The courtesy of rulers honours mutual responsibilities of king and knights. The king rewards Lancelot for his service in the Roman wars and provides "play and game" with which "Sir Launcelot rested hym longe" on his return to court (p. 253). The king remains loyal to Lancelot and, despite rumours, refuses to condemn Lancelot for his great love for the queen, maintaining his dignity and showing, by his silence, sympathy for the great knight's predicament. Malory says Arthur "put that all oute of his thought" (p. 617). Only when the security of the realm is threatened does he challenge Lancelot, the flower of courtesy. King Arthur relies on Lancelot for support and advice, for example, when the quest for the Sankgreal disrupts the court, when Guenevere needs a champion and when Sir Urry must be healed. He remains calm and courteous, when Guenevere returns from Joyous Gard, led by Sir Lancelot. The king sits "stylle" and says "no worde" (p. 1196) at this difficult time, showing by his withdrawal of the ritual of welcome his extreme displeasure but refusing to argue or condemn him in public. Although Gawain, the discourteous,

interrupts Lancelot's self-defense, the king keeps peace. "Well, well, sir Launcelot, he says, "I have gyvyn you no cause to do to me as ye have done, for I have worshipt you and youres more than ony othir knyghtes" (p. 1197). Lancelot is allowed to justify his behaviour and when he repents, vowing to go "in my shearte; bare-foote" from Sandwiche to Carlyle and to endow houses of religion, King Arthur is so touched "the tearys felle" on his cheeks (p. 1200).

Lancelot shows great courtesy, in imitation of King Arthur, during the seige of Benwick, showing what salutory effects a good ruler may have on his subjects. Tragically for Arthur, it is Lancelot who is the indirect instrument of his nephew Gawain's fatal wound. The old way of vengeance in Gawain is confronted by the new way of courtesy in Lancelot and courtesy survives, a hopeful sign for the future.

King Arthur's courtesy allows him to forego jealousy in order to recognize prowess in the best warrior, even when he is a stranger. At the tournament of the Castle of Maidens, Lancelot and Arthur believe Tristram of Cornwall deserves the prize, although "all the astatis and degrees, hyghe and lowe" would award it to Lancelot (p. 534). Fairness in awarding worship is of great concern to Arthur, who says of Tristram, "I am more hevy that I can nat mete with hym than I am for all the hurtys that all my knyghtes have had at the turnement" (p. 534). Arthur engages Tristram in a joust and accepts the defeat gracefully, later welcoming Sir Tristram to his court in a formal ceremony, a ritual which reflects

the ideal behaviour of his court. As King Arthur takes Sir Tristram "by the honde"[18] and goes "to the Table Rounde" (p. 571), Queen Guenevere and her ladies say "at one voyce, 'Welcom, sir Trystram!' The ritual words are repeated by the damsels and then by King Arthur, who follows with a speech. Noble accomplishments indicating potential for courtesy are especially praised. Tristram is one of the best knights, of noble birth, hunts well and recognizes the worth of ritual, in hawking and hunting. His sensitive nature allows him to excel at playing "all instrumentes of musyk," and because he possesses so many of the courtly virtues already, he is especially welcome to join the Round Table society.

Generosity and a desire to improve society motivate King Arthur to open his court to all who wish to honour it by fulfilling courtly ideals. Palomides, a Saracen, is not denied access and hospitality but he must become Christian to be a worthy knight of the Round Table. Called the "good knyght" and a "knyght of kynge Arthures," he accepts the challenge of avenging the death of Harmaunce, lord of the Red City, who was a lover of "arraunte knyghtes of kynge Arthurs courte" (p. 711). Palomides rights a great wrong for a king who has angered his relations by raising two "perelous" outsiders to positions of importance at his court. Treason results from this unnatural practice and the

---

[18] Chastellain, "chevalier, indiciaire et conseiller des Ducs de Bourgogne, Philippe-le-bon et Charles-le temeraire," describes this courtly gesture. See "Chronique du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain," in Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'Histoire de France, ed. J. Buchon (Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876), p. 645.

king is killed by his foster children. Palomides rescues his people from their tyranous overlords, receiving fame as a reward. At the tournament at Lonezep, Palomides learns to abide by the rules of Arthur's court. He finally gives up his hopeless love for Isolde in recognition of the virtues of chivalric courtesy, having been saved by Lancelot from a shameful death and made aware of the joys of fellowship with Tristram. After completing a series of battles which he vows to perform as penance, he accepts Christianity and the "kynge and all the courte were ryght glad" (p. 845). Conversion of the pagan knight precedes the advent of Galahad at court and the relation of the two events suggests that Arthur's Christian influence on his people is the factor which influences the arrival of the Holy Grail at this special court.

Arthur is unfailingly polite to ladies, who, according to the code of courtly love, inspire noble acts in their knights. Early in his reign, a damsel, girt with a sword, arrives to find a worthy knight who can draw the sword from its scabbard. Arthur sets an example himself, not presuming that he is the best knight but to help the lady. The Lady of the Lake chooses this moment to demand a boon he owes her: the head of the damsel or the head of Balin.'' Arthur refuses to allow such a shameful breach of security at his court but shame falls on him through an impulsive act by

---

'' The Lady of the Lake allows Arthur to take the magic sword from the hand which holds it above the water if he will promise her a gift. He agrees and she says, "I woll aske my gyffte whan I se my tyme" (p. 53).

Balin, who beheads the Lady of the Lake. In this early period of his reign Arthur confronts the old way of vengeance and denies its validity. The lady is buried "rychely," although Merlin discloses the fact that she is the "falsist damesell that lyveth" (p. 67).

In a later example of courtesy to ladies Arthur rides to meet Elaine, daughter of King Pelles, when she comes to visit Camelot. The king "salwed her, and so ded the moste party of all the knyghtes of the Rounde Table" (p. 803). Although Bors later blames Elaine and Guenevere for destroying Lancelot, King Arthur remains hospitable and polite, escorting Elaine back through the forest with her knights "mo than an hondred," at her leave-taking. Elaine of Astolat receives noble treatment as well. King Arthur makes sure that Lancelot intends to do his duty for the damsel who died for love of him. It "woll be youre worshyp that ye overse that she be entered worshypfully" (p. 1097), he reminds Lancelot when Elaine is discovered in her funeral barge.

Isolde, after discourteous treatment at Mark's court, accompanies Tristram to the tournament at Lonezep, remaining "in a secrete place that was honeste for her astate," arranged by Lancelot (p. 686). When she is introduced to King Arthur he kisses her and there is "joy wythoute mesure" (p. 757) as Arthur praises Isolde's beauty and Tristram's prowess. Arthur provides hospitality, games and training in the rules of courtesy at this tournament, where an "assemble

of noble knyghtes and fayre ladyes" gathers to honour Sir Tristram's arrival in England.

Courtesy, unlike chivalry, is a concern of ladies and Arthur's queen provides an example for courtly ladies to follow. From the day of her marriage, Guenevere always receives the respect of King Arthur, who has chosen the "most valyaunte and fayryst" (p. 97) lady he can find to grace the position of queen. The wedding and the coronation are held "in the moste hono[r]ablyst wyse that cowde be devised" (p. 98). The Round Table comes as an unexpected gift from Leodogrance, a change from the source in which the power represented by the table is the chief attraction for Arthur, not the beauty of his wife.[20] Guenevere takes her place as queen and head of the royal court from the day of her wedding, especially in matters concerning the treatment of ladies, as, for example, in Gawain's judgement, when he returns from the quest he follows at the wedding feast. At the queen's command, Gawain swears "for ever whyle he lyved to be with all ladyes and to fyght for hir quarels; and ever that he sholde be curteyse, and never refuse mercy to hym that askith mercy" (p. 108).

Malory's changes in the role that Guenevere plays as partner in controlling courteous behaviour heightens the tragedy of her later infidelity to the king. She performs her duties at court with dignity and skill, demonstrating the ennobling effect a courtly lady may have on knights.

---

[20] Vinaver, Works, p. 1324, n, 98.

Guenevere brings knights with her to Arthur's court as part of her dowry and exercises her right to reward or chastise them, as she does Pellinor who neglects his own daughter in his enthusiasm for chivalric adventures.[21] She represents the power of the courtly lady whose successes and failures reflect the strengths and weaknesses of courtesy. Guenevere receives defeated opponents of Round Table knights, meting out praise publicly to advertise the fame of successful knights and inspiring courteous behaviour. As a teacher, leader of the illustrious court party, the queen judges actions according to the code of courtesy.

The queen, who is a leader of courtly behaviour and instructs knights in their duties, has the beauty which indicates noble worth and the dignity which allows her to provide a worthy example of courtesy. She shows devotion to her duty as a teacher and protectress of "fame" (p. 1058) when she returns Lancelot's sword to him at a tournament during which he would have been shamed if his queen had not taken pity on him. Lancelot credits this act for inspiring his undying loyalty to Arthur's queen. Guenevere develops rituals, for example when she and her knights enjoy a Maying expedition and when she arranges a dinner for her knights. Guenevere possesses a talent for organization which, at the end of her life, equips her to become the abbess at Amesbury and she takes an honoured place at tournaments and

---

[21] Vinaver notes that Pellinor recognizes his own guilt in the source, and Arthur agrees with him. Malory gives Guenevere Arthur's speech. See Works, p. 1333, n. 119.

festivals, inspiring knights to achieve greater prowess. Guenevere's responsible position at court promotes the duty of the knight to serve ladies, a task which often involves aid to the helpless or oppressed. Distressed ladies appeal to knights of the Round Table for help in a variety of causes, in regaining lost lands, removing swords, catching escaped hawks, rescuing them from wicked pursuers and in assisting their unfortunate knights. Gareth rescues a lady besieged in her castle as his first adventure, falls in love with the lady and then marries her. Serving ladies is an important part of courtesy and whenever a serious problem occurs in the land King Arthur and his knights are requested to help. In the campaign against the Five Kings Guenevere accompanies Arthur, making him "the more hardy" (p. 127) and showing noble courage herself. Guenevere praises Kay, promising to increase his "noble fame," and in a later battle, praises Lamorak, adding to his renown. At court the queen receives defeated opponents of Round Table knights who are sent to Camelot for punishment. In the case of Sir Pedyvere Guenevere's judgement, that the knight who killed a lady in Lancelot's protection carry the body to the Pope on his saddle, is supported by the pontiff. The knight afterward "fell to grete goodnesse and was an holy man and an hermyte" (p. 286). Each of the noble virtues demonstrated by the queen illustrates an important feature of courtesy which she inspires: courage, pity, service to ladies, concern for renown, generosity, hospitality, a joyful nature

and the capacity for a true and loyal love. Guenevere's regal demeanour falters only as she becomes jealous of Lancelot and forgets her responsibilities.

The king's attitude of respect for his queen is assumed when acknowledging her role in his venture to support courtesy as a means of improving society. He also treats his queen with dignity when his knights demand satisfaction for the dishonour which falls on them all at the dinner she has arranged. When Sir Patrice dies of poisoning, a shameful experience for the company of a court famous for its hospitality, the king arranges a judicial duel and appoints a champion for his wife. He regrets that as official judge of the quarrel he is unable to defend her himself. Believing that she is innocent, he still places public duty before private wishes, insisting, however, that the queen's position be respected by his knights.

The importance of Guenevere's position is recognized publicly when she returns from Joyous Gard. Arthur's dignity remains intact and the magnificence of the ceremony testifies that the court still maintains the appearance of order, power and stability even as vengeance and thoughts of treason cause disturbances below the surface. The tendency of courtesy to encourage a belief that appearance is indicative of true feelings is revealed in Morte Darthur as a weakness in the code of courtesy. On her return to Camelot, the queen accepts her responsibilities once more, but perhaps because she has forfeited Arthur's trust, she is

placed under Mordred's "gouvernance"[22] during Arthur's vengeful, destructive war in France. As Arthur succombs to feelings of anger and frustration, Guenevere revives her determination to remain loyal to her position. Resisting Mordred's plans, she gains the support of the Bishop of Canterbury, the official guardian of the crown, and once more becomes the exemplary queen.[23]

In her final scene at Amesbury the queen, as "abbas and rular, as reson wolde" (p. 1252) employs her administrative talents learned at court, while striving to redeem her soul. She makes a public confession before her "ladyes and jantillwomen," who also witness the renunciation of worldly love and her command that Lancelot "forsake my company" (p. 1252). Emotion is restrained by the need for recognition of public duty. She attains more than worldly status in her final hours when she is granted foreknowledge of Lancelot's ritual burial of the queen's body beside her "lord kyng Arthur." She expresses a desire like Galahad's to "have a syght of the blyssed face of Cryste Jesu, and on Doomesday to sytte on Hys ryght syde" (p. 1252). The king and queen of England who preside over the great plan directed by God are equally wise, noble and beautiful examples of courteous leaders.

---

[22] The reason given by Malory, "Bycause sir Mordred was kynge Arthurs son," is not found in other versions. Arthur may be showing belated anger and punishing Guenevere.

[23] Malory uses the Mort Artu with details expanded from the Morte Arthur to provide a coherent narrative. See Vinaver, p. 1646, n. 1227 and p. 1623. In the Alliterative Morte Arthure Guenevere capitulates to Mordred's demands.

King Arthur's court derives its legendary fame as much from its practice of courtesy as from its splendour, which in Morte Darthur is conferred as a sign of divine approval for the aims of the court. The admirable courtesy of King Arthur remains intact even when he is dealing with those who would destroy him, such as Morgan la Faye. When a rich mantle arrives as a present from his treacherous sister, Arthur maintains his dignity. He says "lytyl" (p. 157), although he is made suspicious by Nineve's warning. When the mantle proves to be deadly, the king is angry but fair. He sends Morgan's son, Uwayne, away from court to prove his worthiness but excuses King Uryence, Morgan's husband, from complicity. Uwayne is received at court after "a twelve-monthe" of testing and Arthur is "passyng glad" to see him again (p. 179). When Morgan steals Arthur's sword and gives it to her lover, Accolon, so that he may kill Arthur in a duel, he does not realize whom he is fighting. Arthur remains devout, hardy and conscious of his good name in the battle for his life. He forgives Accolon and arranges for his wounds to be cared for. Despite treatment Accolon dies and Arthur makes a proud gesture of defiance, worthy of a king. He sends the body to his sister as a present, with a message that he has recovered his sword, Excalibur. Morgan steals the scabbard the next opportunity she gets, testing Arthur's patience again. Arthur maintains his dignity throughout his trials with his sister, merely making a vow to be avenged. Arthur's courtesy extends to offering

hospitality to Morgan each time she arrives at court, even though she maintains an "evil custom" (p. 597) of destroying Arthur's knights when she can.

King Mark of Cornwall also receives mercy and hospitality, although Arthur says, "ye ar wellcom in a maner, and in a maner ye ar nat wellcom" (p. 594). Mark arrives in a shameful manner, begging mercy of Sir Lancelot and prostrating himself at Arthur's feet. He has been called the "shamfullist knyght of a kynge that is now lyvynge," (p. 580) by Sir Lamorak, mocked by Sir Dinadan, the good knight, shamed by Sir Torre, and Sir Berluse and forced by Sir Lancelot to face King Arthur and Queen Guenevere. King Arthur encourages a reconciliation between Sir Tristram and King Mark, for the "great pleasure" (p. 595) he has in Tristram's company, displaying the generous nature which differentiates courteous kings from scoundrels like Mark. Arthur makes every effort to help his friend, the good knight Sir Tristram and does his best to discourage treachery wherever he finds it.

Mark's court in Cornwall provides a contrast with Camelot which highlights the virtues of courtesy. Far from remaining at the centre of an orderly realm, as Arthur does, Mark disguises himself and sneaks into Arthur's territory "to the entente to sle sir Trystram" (p. 577). Mark's knights of Cornwall are noted for treacherous behaviour but it is Mark, himself, who sets the example. Jealousy causes Mark to destroy his worthy brother, a guest at dinner, in

the presence of his wife. Hospitality means nothing to Mark, who attempts further murders, which are prevented by the warning of Isolde. Mark's sister-in-law and her young son, Alexander, escape from Mark's sword with "suche poore men as durste ryde with hir" (p. 634), or in a shameful fashion for a noble lady. Mark persists in his vile behaviour, sending Sir Sadoke to bring the fugitives back to his court. Sir Sadoke regrets this task but allows the pair to escape only when the lady promises to raise her son safely, in obscurity, so that he may avenge his father's death. Sir Sadoke and other Cornish knights are more courteous than their king, a reversal of the situation at Arthur's court. In general, however, they have a reputation for cowardice which reflects the king's example. Years after this shameful episode, King Mark hears that Alexander has been knighted in a grand ceremony which might have been a function of his uncle's court, if he had been an honourable king. Alexander's vow to avenge his father's death, reported by Sir Sadok, provokes Mark to cry treason and to attempt to kill his faithful steward. Mark shows lack of mercy, mesure, pity, generosity, loyalty, concern for his name and a strong need for vengeance, opposite qualities of courtesy. In his court there is a marked lack of ceremony, ritual and predictable, orderly behaviour, matching the disregard for loyalty and the law. Mark is jealous of his brother's fame, sends counterfeit letters purporting to be from the Pope, indulges in adultery with the wife of an earl, threatens his

dwarf and imprisons the fair Isolde. The king of Cornwall provides a poor example of behavior to his people.

Although Tristram saves Cornwall from the need to pay a ruinous "trewage" to Ireland, proving to be almost as great a knight as Lancelot, Mark refuses to show him love or loyalty in any consistent fashion. Once Mark's jealous nature makes him seek vengeance rather than reconciliation over the problem created by Tristram's great love for Isolde, Tristram's service to Cornwall is forgotten. King Mark places his own personal pleasures before national concerns. In Morte Darthur, Mark shows consideration for his nephew's welfare at first.[24] However, it is when Tristram, Bleoberys and he all struggle over the right to enjoy the favours of Sir Segwaride's wife, that Mark shows his dishonourable and jealous nature for the first time. He sends Tristram to Ireland "to the entente to sle sir Trystramys" (p. 403), allowing the court to believe that his intention is to honour his nephew with the task of escorting the future queen of Cornwall home. Mark knows the difference between right and wrong but deliberately chooses evil, in contrast to King Arthur.

Lack of courtesy at Mark's court relates directly to the evil direction of its king. Mark's people are disloyal, disorganized and unhappy because their leader does not

---

[24] Mark's character changes in Malory, but is treacherous from the start in the prose Tristan. See Eugene Vinaver, Etudes sur le Tristan en Prose (Paris, 1925), pp. 132, 186-190. Thomas Rumble, "The Tale of Tristram," in Lumiansky, p. 132.

honour the code of courtesy. For example, the scant description of Isolde's wedding marks Tristram's prowess as the only interesting or unusual event. Unlike the extended festivities, lavish hospitality and great joy shown in Arthur's court, evidence of the opposite, hatred and intrigue, soon surfaces. Not long after the wedding, Isolde's ladies arrange to assassinate dame Brangwayne, the queen's favorite companion. Hate and envy at Mark's court affect even the ladies. Queen Isolde, in contrast to queen Guenevere, who is always escorted, walks into a forest alone and bemoans her misfortunes. When Palomides finds her standing alone at a well and offers to help, the queen agrees to grant a boon to him for his service. Palomides frees dame Brangwayne and returns her to Isolde "halff agayne hir wyll" (p. 420). The queen's companion fears the atmosphere at court and does not show the love and loyalty common to Arthur's favourites. Isolde arranges to have Palomides come before King Mark to ask for his prize, hoping for the protection of her king. Mark, instead of arranging for an honourable solution to her problem, agrees to let Palomides have his wife, the queen, with no ceremony, no wrath, no moral compunctions, hoping that the noble Sir Tristram will save her. The queen of Cornwall is left in the forest to watch while Palomides fights with Tristram's servant, the only one at court who protests the discourteous treatment of his queen. The servant is easily defeated by the strong knight, Palomides. Luckily for Isolde, a

courteous knight recognizes the value of service to ladies and rescues her, taking her into his castle, otherwise, she "had thought to have drowned herselff" (p. 421) for shame.[35]

The courteous knight Tristram fights a mighty battle with Palomides when he returns from hunting, bringing Isolde back to court, a deed for which he is "cheryshed" for a short while, not for life as Arthur would advocate. In showing Mark to be cowardly, Malory describes a ridiculous scene in which Tristram "shoke hys swerde to the kynge and made countenaunce as he wolde have strykyn hym," causing Mark to flee and fall "on the nose" in his shameful retreat. "At that tyme" none of Mark's knights will challenge Tristram to support the king, nor will they "meve for his wordys" (p. 426). Lack of courtesy produces contempt in Mark's own knights and makes leadership or control impossible for the king. A marked contrast exists between lawlessness and disorder at the court of Cornwall, where courtesy is not honoured and the orderly dignity King Arthur tries to maintain at his court, where law is always respected.

Mark's barons understand the importance of Tristram's respect for the rules of courtesy and counsel the king to make friends with the best knight at his court, who is also

---

[35] This incident has a parallel with contrasting features in the Knight of the Cart episode, in which Guenevere is protected by many good knights as she rides through the forest in royal style. Her abductor is a villain, Melleagaunce, who has no right to her company.

his nephew. He acts on this advice for a time until jealousy consumes him once more. A court of law convened to try Tristram for adultery breaks up in disorder with an argument between Tristram and his kinsman. Tristram escapes the law by leaping onto the "craggys in the see" (p. 432) from the window of a chapel.

Tristram must rescue Isolde who has been put into a "lazar-cote, a "full ungoodly place for suche a fayre lady" (p. 432) by the king, who violates the rule of service to ladies at every opportunity. Although Tristram lives in a fair forest with Isolde until the king steals her away and keeps her prisoner in his court, King Mark's vile behaviour forces his nephew into this display of courtesy and respect for ladies. Tristram has more pity, loyalty and capacity for true love than his uncle can understand. Mark's court is the epitome of disorder, lawlessness and disrespect for ladies, a place where vengeance rules over loyalty and violence over pity and where adultery is the norm.[26]

Unlike King Mark, King Arthur rules justly and with a kindly dignity over a court in which ritual and ceremony display homage to the principle of order in the universe.[27] The first ceremony, his own coronation, is a public declaration of the king's devotion to justice for all estates. Confident that he is the rightful king through

---

[26] The magic horn which Lamerok diverts to Mark's court proves that only four out of one hundred ladies tested are true (p. 430). The magic horn as a test for chastity dates from early times; see The Anglo-Norman Text of "Le Lai du Cor," ed. C. Eriksen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959).

[27] Huizinga, p. 47.

legitimate inheritance[28] as well as by special election,[29] Arthur ceremoniously places Excalibur on the altar to receive the blessing of the Archbishop. "Ther was he sworne unto his lords and the comyns for to be a true king, to stand with true justyce fro thens forth the dayes of this lyff." He presides over his court and sees to it that the lords "do seruyce as they oughte to doo." Wrongs of the old order are redressed and peace is established in "all Englond." A "grete feste" (p. 16) celebrates the anniversary of his coronation, at Pentecost.

Arthur's wedding is a state occasion at which Guenevere takes her place as queen and co-judge of courtesy. The Archbishop blesses the event, an honour for king and church, in acknowledgement of the prevailing hierarchy. The entertainment provided teaches the young knights, who participate in quests, important lessons in courtesy. Gawain always shows loyalty to kin[30] and stops a fight between brothers, but he lacks good judgement and mesure and refuses mercy.[31] Guenevere sets a quest of ladies on the knight who hastily, and in error, beheads a helpless lady in the act of begging for mercy. Torre courteously remembers religious devotions, grants mercy, keeps promises and serves ladies. He succeeds in his quest and receives worship as a reward

---

[28] Malory stresses Arthur's legitimacy, changing his source, see Vinaver, Works, pp. 1288-9.

[29] The sword which Arthur removes from the stone can only be achieved by the one who will be "rightwys kynge borne of all En[g]lond." See Vinaver, Works, p. 12.

[30] Dupin, p. 38.

[31] Dupin, p. 89.

when he returns to court. King Pellinor makes an unfortunate choice, leaving a lady who begs for help while he pursues his quest for another who is not in trouble. Merlin reveals later that the lady he had ignored, his own daughter, died from his neglect. The queen rebukes Pellinor for this error. Merlin predicts that Pellinor will be punished by God, another indication that the events at Arthur's court follow rules patterned on God's orderly universe. Wedding celebrations are lengthy and elaborate and other rituals at Arthur's court are given their full measure of respect.

Respect for peaceful order, hospitality, generosity and concern for the prowess of knights is granted heavenly approval as Tristram is made a knight of the Round Table and welcomed formally. Following this ceremony,

> Than wente kynge Arthure unto the seges aboute the Rounde Table, and loked on every syege whyche were voyde that lacked knyghtes. And than the kynge sye in the syege of sir Marhalt lettyrs that seyde: THIS IS THE SYEGE OF THE NOBLE KNYGHT SIR TRYSTRAMYS. And than kynge Arthure made sir Tristram a knyght of the Round Table wyth grete nobeley and a feste as myght be thought. (p. 572)

Feasts grace important ceremonies, providing opportunity to display generosity, kindness, enjoyment of worldly beauty and promotion of brotherhood.

The "felyshyp" of Arthur's court is the support which maintains his ideal society. Loss of this support splits the realm into factions and precedes its downfall. As Lancelot rescues Guenevere from the judicial fire, Arthur mourns this

loss: "Alas, that ever I bare crowne uppon my hede! For now have I loste the fayryst felyshyp of noble knyghtes that ever hylde Crystyn kynge togeydirs" (p. 1183). He knows that his "worshyp" and the health of the realm are invested in the cooperation of his knights. Fellowship and courtesy are closely related.

The fellowship of King Arthur's court receives blessing from a divine source when Galahad joins the Round Table. King Arthur presides over preliminary strange occurrences with his usual dignity, suggesting a ritual removal of the sword from the stone floating in the river. When he discovers that the "beste knyght" has not yet arrived, he leads the way back to the hall, where "every knyght knew hys owne place and sette hym therin" (p. 858). God's order is accepted and a worldly copy of that order exists at Arthur's table. Arthur extends welcome and hospitality, to Galahad and the "awnciente" who accompanies him, accepting the miracles which occur. The meal proceeds decorously with the king remaining calmly regal. Even when his worst fears are realized and the knights are preparing to leave him, Arthur upholds the law. King Arthur blames Mordred for his disaster. His last responsibility as king is to remove this determined representative of evil from his realm.[32] Arthur is brave and dutiful to the end of his life, remembering to return his magic sword to the Lady of the Lake. Malory

---

[32] Mordred's violent action in thrusting himself onto Arthur's spear shows unusual determination to kill the king. The adder represents fate, or circumstance, and Mordred seems driven to accomplish his part in the predestined plan.

provides two endings for his tale, a regal ceremony of burial for a Christian king and a magic boat which transports the mythic hero to Avalon to be healed.

Malory's King Arthur has shown the world the possibilities inherent in an ideal of courtesy at his court. Courage, skill at arms and prowess reach their height of achievement when enlightened by Christian and courtly virtues. The Golden Age ends but its values remain, as William Caxton was aware when he printed his edition of Morte Darthur "to the entente that noble men mey see and lerne the noble actes of chivalry/ the Jentyl and virtuous dedes that somme knyghtes vsed in tho dayes/ by whyche they came to honour . . . and to folowe the same."[33]

King Arthur examplifies the courtesy of rulers, which is a combination of the knightly virtues of nobility, prowess, generosity, courage and loyalty, with the truthfulness, pity, mercy, humility and devoutness of the Christian leader. He upholds God's order by honouring worldly reflections of it in rituals and ceremonies at court. He leads his people to a just and prosperous way of life, encouraged by signs of divine approval. Fellowship, la joie, beautiful surroundings and a "good end" reward those who follow the rules of courtesy.

---

[33] Vinaver, Works, p. cxlv.

III. The Courtesy of Secular Knights

Tradition has it that ideal behaviour, or courtesy, reached a high degree of excellence at King Arthur's court. "Historical" accounts of King Arthur's courtesy such as Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia are blended with literary embellishments which imitated a knightly ideal created by poets, among them Chrétien de Troyes.[1] In Christine de Pisan's Epitre d'Othéa à Hector (1440), which was written as a guide to courtly behaviour, Diane Bornstein says the ideal world "reflects the real world yet transcends it."[2] William Caxton was convinced that Malory's Morte Darthur was similarly useful to the ruling class in his day.[3] The courtesy of knights is achieved through education and through application to a code of behaviour which has been devised to provide direction for the nobility. The ruling class provided a period of training and practice for its youth, demanding adherence to rules and respect for ritual.[4]

---

[1] Eleanor of Aquitain's court poet wrote several works including Le Chevalier de la Charrette, a tale of Lancelot's devotion to Queen Guenevere. See Jean Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes (Paris: Hatier-Boivin, 1968), pp. 2-4.

[2] Bornstein, p. 50.

[3] J. B. Crotch, ed., The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton (London: Oxford University Press, 1928) p. 94.

[4] Georges Chastelain, "Chroniques du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain," in Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'histoire de France, ed. J. A. C. Buchon (Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876), p. 645. Christine de Pisan, The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye, translated and printed by William Caxton, ed. A. Byles (London: Oxford

Young men were prepared for war by older, skilled advisors and taught by ladies of the court to appreciate refined behaviour.[5]

In preparation for his role as ruler of England in its Golden Age, King Arthur must first prove to his people that he is a worthy knight in the field. His skills are demonstrated during early battles in which he unites the unruly barons and establishes peace. Although Arthur is their king his barons recognize him as their military leader, bound by the same laws of knighthood which they honour. They respect their leader as first among worthy knights, and the behaviour he demands from them at court reflects his concern for the brotherhood of the Round Table. To the end of his reign the fame of King Arthur rests in the prowess, of his knights and they, in turn, accept the glory which comes from being a member of the brotherhood.[6]

The courtesy of knights at Arthur's court, which contains the formula and the ideal that Malory believes in as a guide to moral behaviour, is exemplified by Lancelot. Lancelot's virtues are described by his brother, Sir Ector, when he recalls the great courtesy of the best knight of the world while he eulogizes over his body at Joyous Gard where Lancelot has been taken after his death. He was, Ector says,

---

[4] (cont'd)University Press, 1932).

[5] Antoine de la Salle, Le Petit Jehan de Saintré (1386-1462), trans. Irvine Gray (London: George Routledge, 1931), pp. 15-21. Jean Frappier, Amour Courtois and Table Ronde (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1973), p. 91.

[6] In his last battle King Arthur says, as he realizes that all his knights are dead, "Now . . . I am com to myne ende" (p. 1236).

"hede of all crysten knyghtes" (p. 1259). He was "never matched of erthely knyghtes hande" and was "the curtest knyght that ever bare shelde." The "truest frende to thy lover that ever bestrade hors," Ector calls him the "trewest lover of a synful man that ever loved woman" and the "kyndest man that ever strake with swerde." At once the "godelest persone," the "mekest man and the jentyllest that ever ete in halle emonge ladyes," he was also the "sternest knyght" to his foes "that ever put spere in the breste" (p. 1259). These knightly virtues summarize Malory's code of behaviour and are "the leading 'motif' of his story."[7]

Lancelot's courtesy regulates his relationship to his king, his fellow knights, his inferiors and ladies. He embodies the ideals of the chivalric code which the knights swear annually at the Pentocostal Feast to honour. They agree

> . . . never to do outerage nothir morthir, and allwayes to fle treson, and to gyff mercy unto hym that askith mercy, uppon payne of forfiture [of their] worship and lordshyp of kynge Arthure for evirmore; and allwayes to do ladyes, damesels, and jantilwomen and wydowes [socour:] strengthe them in hir ryghtes, and never to enforce them, uppon payne of dethe. Also, that no man take no batayles in a wrongefull quarell for no love ne for no worldis goodis. (p. 120)

Lancelot's life provides the pattern for Round Table knights to follow in all aspects of courtesy. Since he is the most courteous, the bravest and the noblest of "erthely"

---

[7] Eugene Vinaver, Malory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929), p. 60.

knights, his tragic part in the downfall of Arthur's court seems to be inevitable-- a result of circumstances. Lancelot's worst flaw instability, the quality which a hermit reminds Lancelot means that he does not remain stedfast in his duty to God, makes Malory's hero attractive and recognizably human, representative of the best in struggling humanity.

Lancelot is noble by birth and character. His ancestry counts seven illustrious kings, his father being King Ban, one of the two kings from across the water who helps Arthur establish his kingdom, on Merlin's advice. Nobility is essential in the ruling class and therefore essential to courtesy. A member of Arthur's new court, Lancelot arrives soon after the enemies of the young king have been vanquished and Camelot has become the centre of a unified society. It is in the great war with the Emperor Lucius that Lancelot distinguishes himself first as a knight who "ded so grete dedys of armys" that both sides "had mervayle of his myght" (p. 217), receiving with Sir Bors "their fadyrs landys that kynge Ban and kynge Bors welded" in gratitude for service to Arthur in his just war to free Christian people.[8] Once Arthur's court becomes the centre of a thriving community of knights who train and prove themselves in "many joustys and turnementes," none is more amazing in his success than Sir Lancelot, "for in all turnementes,

---

[8] P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte, in Essays, ed. J. A. W. Bennett, p. 70, points out that Lancelot's character was changed substantially by Malory who leaves out early references to Lancelot's affair with the queen.

justys, and dedys of armys, both for lyff and deth, he passed all other knyghtes, and at no tyme was he ovircom but if hit were by treson other inchauntement" (p. 253). Malory says Lancelot was the "fyrste knyghte that the Frey[n]sh booke makyth me[n[cion of aftir kynge Arthure com frome Rome" (p. 253).'

Malory shows that Lancelot is first of all a knight, with skill at arms which surpasses all others. He provides an example for his peers by using his skills, as Arthur would have him do, in righting wrongs and maintaining the rules of chivalry (p. 273), trying at all times to be humble, merciful, loyal, generous and debonair, the perfect companion at arms and skilled in games at court and succeeding admirably, as his increasing renown proves.

Concern for worship, Malory's name for renown, was a primary duty of the knight. The renown of the individual knight reflected glory on the Order of Knighthood. Brothers of the Round Table were sworn to increase the honour of the group and no one does that better, or more conscientiously than Lancelot. Lancelot takes care to send his captives to court to "bare recorde," publicly, for the chroniclers, of deeds completed. Malory says that "at that tyme sir Lancelot had the greytyst name of ony knyght of the worlde, and most

---

' Lumiansky, "The Tale of Lancelot" in Malory's Originality p. 93, . . . says, "This introductory passage . . . does not match any section of Malory's source. It is obviously his device for connecting the "Book of Tristram" to the "Book of the King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius." See also Mary Dichmann "The Tale of King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius," in Malory's Originality, ed. Lumiansky, p. 74.

was he honoured of hyghe and lowe" (p. 287).

The brotherhood of the Round Table is frequently mentioned, as knights identify themselves by name and include the information "knyght of the Table Rounde" (p. 38). Lancelot helps Sir Melyot because he is "a felow of the Table Rounde, and to his helpe I woll do my power" (p. 279).[10] The loyalty Lancelot shows to his fellows is returned, as close friends spend effort, time and money searching for the missing knight when he is injured and disappears (p. 1083) and when he runs mad out of Camelot, banished by Guenevere and driven to distraction by the complex loyalties he tries to maintain.[11]

The noble Lancelot, an example to others, is kind and generous to Gareth, believing that the qualities of "a man of grete worshyp" (p. 295) will become evident, despite Sir Kay's scornful attitude toward his charge. Gareth chooses Sir Lancelot to make him a knight, seeing the greatest qualities of courtesy and chivalry in his hero. Lancelot praises his protegé generously, admitting that he might have been shamed in their duel, the young man was so strong and skillful. Mutual respect, courtesy and loyalty between the two remain firm later, adding a special poignancy to the tragedy of the younger man's death by accident at the hands of his hero.

---

[10] The treason of Meleagaunce makes "all ashamed on hys behalffe" (p. 1138).

[11] Beverley Kennedy, "Malory's Lancelot: 'Trewest Lover, of a Synful Man,'" Viator, 12 (1981), 429.

Besides loyalty, a courteous knight should possess debonairté, that is the ability to express joy and be a cheerful companion.[12] Lancelot has many friends and joins in the games at court. In the tournament at Surluse, he wears a disguise and participates in the fun during the feast which follows the games, making remarks that cause the queen and the "Haute Prynce" to "lowghe. . . that they myght nat sytte at their table" (p. 668).

A Christian basis for courtesy is essential. Lancelot's life-long bond of friendship with Tristram, the greatest knight at the court of Cornwall, highlights the differences in the two great knights which make Lancelot's courtesy more highly developed. They are equally proficient in feudal courtesy, in loyalty to their equals and in respect for the rules of battle, but Lancelot excels in the spiritual idealism which Tristram does not attempt to understand. Tristram returns to his lady as Lancelot leaves on his quest for the Holy Grail. The mutual respect of the two great knights survives a temporary quarrel over the importance Lancelot places on loyalty to a lady, a virtue Tristram comes to value himself in Morte Darthur, following the example of his friend.

Knights, sworn to the High Order of Knighthood, respect one another despite barriers and quarrels between the larger groups, such as that which exists between the courts of King Mark and King Arthur. Even Palomides, who is not a

---

[12] See Dupin, pp. 74-80.

Christian, is respected for his bravery. He is such a good knight in all other ways that he is welcomed to the Christian community at Arthur's court after completing a self-imposed set of trials. He proves honourable and merciful, is faithful to his lady if hopelessly so and finally decides to be sensible, give up courtly love, ask for Tristram's forgiveness and become christened. He joins the Round Table knights in paying homage to King Arthur while the brotherhood rejoices at the happy ending to this disagreement.

However, the paramount aspect of secular courtesy is the knight's love for a lady. The beloved inspires the deeds of prowess which establish the knight's reputation and contribute to the honour of the court. In particular Lancelot is defined by his love for Guenevere. Before any evidence of a love affair between Lancelot and Guenevere is offered, rumours, often those spread by the wicked Morgan La Faye, provide hints of what actually comes to pass later, as if society condemns Lancelot before the fact and pressures him into fulfilling Merlin's prophecy that Lancelot will love Guenevere. Le Chevalier de la Charrette probably introduces Lancelot and Guenevere as lovers for the first time in literature. Chrétien suggests that love is a stronger force than public shame for Lancelot.'[3] Jean Frappier says of Chrétien's Lancelot,

---

[3] Jean Frappier, Chrétien de Troyes (Paris: Hatier Boivin, 1968), pp. 124, 139. T. P. Cross and W. A. Nitze, Lancelot and Guenevere, A Study of Courtly Love (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), p. 66.

> . . . il sert à exalter la féminínité idéale ou réelle des précieuses de la cour de Champagne, et de façon plus large et plus durable, le raffinement le plus audacieux de toute la civilization courtois. (Chrétien de Troyes, p. 140).

Courtly love in Chrétien's work exalts an ideal, but actual attempts by courtiers to devise a set of rules for behaviour frequently suggested the humbling of renowned knights to a degree that Malory did not admire. Secrecy, intrigue and aloofness of the lady, all part of the code of love, could lead to unreasonable demands being made on the safety and public image of the knight.'[14] Adultery, assumed to be necessary for love,'[15] clashed directly with the morality of the code of knighthood. A worthy knight was dedicated to maintenance of the law and support of society's institutions, such as marriage. Loyalties to lady and lord frequently conflict in courtly love situations.

Malory proposes a revision of the practice of courtly love, calling it "vertuous love." He compares it with the season of May, linking love to God's order:

> Therefore, lyke as May moneth flowryth and floryshyth in every mannes gardyne, so in lyke wyse lat every man of worshyp florysh hys herte in thys worlde: firste unto God, and nexte unto the joy of them that he promysed hys feythe unto; for there was never worshypfull man nor worshypfull woman but they loved one bettir than another; and worshyp in armys may never be foyled. But

---

[14] Huizinga, p. 71.

[15] Andreas Capellanus, The Art of Courtly Love, trans. J. J. Parry (New York: Frederick Unger, 1964), p. 156.

> firste reserve the honoure to God, and
> secundely thy quarell muste com of thy lady.
> And such love I calle vertuouse love.
> (p.1119)

"Unstable" love, Malory says, is like winter, which defaces "grene summer."

Malory sees Lancelot's failure in the Grail quest to be a consequence of loyalty in love, a virtue in itself but one which conflicts with loyalty to the king and to God's plan for England. The demands of the code of courtesy are complex to the point of being impossible to achieve, even by the best of knights. When Lancelot returns to Camelot, having failed to achieve the Grail because of his sinful nature, he falls once more into his old sin of pleasing his lady first. Malory says he "began to resorte unto quene Guenevere agayne and forgate the promyse and the perfeccion that he made in the queste" (p. 1045). The queen, more jealous than before, resents his attention to the duty of a knight who does service for all "ladyes, damesels and jantilwomen" (p. 120). Malory consistently places the demands of the " hyghe Order of Knyghthode" (p. 886) well above a need for the personal satisfaction of love for a lady in Morte Darthur. True love in Malory's tale leads to a stable marriage in which loyalty is the key to success.

The fundamental importance of marriage in Malory's knightly courtesy is most noticeably illustrated at the marriage festivities of Gareth and his lady, Lyonesse, when feudal loyalty, offered gladly by the knights whom Gareth defeated in trial combat, becomes part of the ritual of the

feast. Gareth's entire story is an illustration of the virtues, both inborn and learned, of courtesy at King Arthur's court. Much of the material may be Malory's own.'[16] From the day when he arrives at court, leaning on the shoulders of two companions as if in need of help, Gareth proves to be unusual, becoming an almost perfect example of a courteous knight. The king offers to help him, encouraging the stranger to make three requests, the first to be allowed to serve as a humble kitchen knave for one year, the second, made a year later, to follow the quest of a lady besieged by a tyrant and the third, to be made a knight by Sir Lancelot and none other. Beawmaynes, as Sir Kay scornfully nicknames him, proves gentle, humble and interested in noble pursuits, despite his odd appearance. King Arthur recognizes hidden worth, as he did in Torre, the cowherd's son,'[17] and grants all three requests. The quest of the lady has been declined by experienced knights because the risks involved, considering that the lady is unnamed, are too great.

---

[16] See Scudder, p. 218; Larry Benson, Chivalric Literature, Essays on relations between literature and life in the later Middle Ages (Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, West Michigan University, 1980), pp. 101-16. Beverly Kennedy, "Malory's Lancelot: 'Trewest Lover, of a Synful Man,'" Viator, 12 (1981), 440.

[17] Like Percival and Torre, Gareth takes to knight-errantry easily, because of his noble birth. Percival explains:

> "A swete modir, we may nat [abyde], for we be comyn of kynges bloode of bothe partis. And therefore, modir, hit ys oure kynde to haunte armys and noble dedys." (p. 810)

Vinaver notes that this is not in Malory's source. Works, p. 1528.

Beawmaynes has nothing to lose but a reputation to gain and so he determines to prove his nobility by displaying courage, fidelity to his purpose, skill at arms and service to ladies. The trials which Gareth's lady leads him through place him in great danger. His damsel heaps abuse on him despite his courage and persistence in the daring rescue of a noble knight who is bound by six thieves, his defeat of two knights who try to prevent him from crossing a river, his slaying of the "Blak Knyght of the Blak Laundis," his overcoming the "Grene Knyght," who cries mercy and receives it and a similar encounter with the "Rede Knyght. When the point that Beawmaynes is worthy and courageous has been made sufficiently clear by his defeat of "sir Persaunte of Inde" (pp. 302-14), the damsel says,

> "A Jesu! mervayle have I, . . . what maner a man ye be, for hit may never be other but that ye be com of jantyll bloode, for so fowle and so shamfully dud never woman revyle a knyght as I have done you, and ever curteysly ye have suffryde me, and that com never but of jantyll bloode." (p. 312)

Gareth's prowess comes from nobility, as does his inner sense of worth which allows him to ignore the exaggerated insults of the damsel. He accepts the usefulness of the damsel's prodding, admitting that "all the mysseyyng that ye mysseyde me in my batayle furthered me much and caused me to thynke to shewe and preve myselffe at the ende what I was . . . " (p. 313). Although he must prove himself worthy before he reaches his besieged potential lover, he is more concerned with knightly prowess than with a need for love.

Prowess proves nobility in his case and even the lady waiting in her castle has his lineage uppermost in her mind, as she demands, "What is he, and of what kynne . . . is he com, and of whom was he made knyght?" (p. 317) The lady plays by the rules of courtly love so long as they are to her advantage, but Malory shows her to be eager and curious as she makes arrangements for hospitality before Gareth arrives at the castle. Revealing a relationship to Otherworld fays,[18] Lyonesse sends offerings of food to sustain her knight as he advances toward her, adding a grateful message,

> ". . . commaunde me unto that jantyll knyght, and pray hym to ete and drynke and make hym stronge, and say hym I thanke hym of his curtesy and goodnesse that he wolde take uppon hym suche labur for me that never ded hym bounté nother curtesy." (p. 318)

Malory indicates the youth and eagerness of Gareth as he attempts to follow the rules of courtly love.[19] He gives a traditional speech when he glimpses a female figure in a distant window of the castle saying, "she besemyth afarre the fayryst lady that ever I lokyd uppon . . . ." He swears "to do batayle, for truly she shall be my lady and for her woll I fyght" (p. 321).

Gareth's earnest pursuit of true love allows him to succeed in his quest for the lady. He follows the rules of courtly love, proving himself gallant, noble, eagerly passionate and virtuous, helped by Lyonet, his damsel guide

---

[18] Patch, p. 240. Frappier, Amour Courtois, p. 47.
[19] Frappier, Amour Courtois, pp. 90-1.

and sister of the besieged lady. Lyonet is forced to interfere dramatically in the love affair to prevent the eager lovers from bringing shame to themselves and their kin. She enlists the help of a supernatural knight who creates a disturbance, wounding Gareth during his midnight meeting with Lyonesse, so that honour is preserved for all.[20]

Gareth has the qualities which make for a potentially courteous knight, his only fault being a human tendency to allow his emotions to cloud his judgement. The great love he shows for his lady is transformed into a true, lasting love which is encouraged and rewarded by King Arthur. A lavish wedding ceremony which lasts forty days marks the importance of the occasion, also attested to by the lengthy list of guests who attend the celebration. Arthur provides hospitality, including "all maner of lodgyng and vytayles that cam by londe and by watir" (p. 344) for the tournament in which Gareth proves himself worthy. The tournament following the wedding allows deeds of bravery and loyalty to be exhibited, while the spirit of fellowship is renewed for each member of the Round Table during the ceremony in which Gareth (Beawmaynes) is publicly accepted as a noble, courteous knight.

The courtly lady has learned the value of virtuous love, saying to King Arthur,

---

[20] Vinaver gives analogues for the beheading game. Works, p. 1438.

> "My moste noble kynge, . . . wete you well that my lorde, sir Gareth, ys to me more lever to have and welde as my husbonde than ony kyng other prynce that is crystyned; and if I may nat have hym, I promyse you I woll never have none. For, my lorde Arthure," seyde dame Lyonesse, "wete you well he is my fyrste love, and he shall be the laste." (pp. 359-60)

Gareth makes a similar statement before his king, his family and the whole court, stressing the need for loyalty in love as in all other personal relationships. Gareth's ideal love inspires others to follow his example, as King Arthur provides hospitality for two other couples who celebrate their marriages in his court during the forty day period of feasting.

Marriages in the fifteenth century were actually contracted as business deals more often than as love matches.[2'] As an important and different feature of King Arthur's idealism, marriage celebrations following the religious ceremony are designed to show approval of stable love. In Morte Darthur, ritual feasting and elaborate entertainments are offered to express joy that society's stability is being honoured in Malory's true lovers who invariably display loyalty to their chosen ladies, a loyalty which borders on obstinacy but which is an admirable source of stability in society.

[2'] In the "Mémoires de Sire Philippe de Commines (1477)," the story of the marriage of "mademoiselle de Bourgogne" to "Maximilien duc d'Austriche" provides an example. See Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'Histoire de France (Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876), pp. 160-1. Froissart also describes marriages made for diplomatic reasons. See the Chronicle of Froissart, VI, 226-9.

The love affair of Pelleas and Ettard runs much less smoothly but provides a contrast which underlines the advantages of "vertuous" love. Malory changes his French source,[22] showing a distaste for the conventions which developed around an idealistic love termed "courtly."[23] The inspiration that love provided was extolled at court, where noble adherents to the idea devised a set of rules for behaviour, often taking the rules to extremes in this, as in other endeavours.[24] Malory's French source describes Ettard as proud and bad-mannered, although she has some reason to reject Pelleas as her lover since he is low-born and she is noble. Malory adds that even her ladies find her too proud. "There was none that was there but and sir Pelleas wolde have profyrde hem love they wolde have shewed hym the same for his noble prouesse" (p. 166). Malory changes Pelleas into a great knight a king who was "far the beste of ony that was there, and there were fyve hondred knyghtes" at the tournament where he chooses Ettard "for his soveraygne lady" (p. 166). In both versions Pelleas is such a faithful lover he allows himself to be humbled repeatedly by the knights of his chosen lady rather than live without her attentions.

In Morte Darthur Gawain's role is changed to illustrate how courtesy includes both the loyalty inherited from a feudal background and the necessity for truthfulness and

---

[22] F. Whitehead, "On Certain Aspects in the Fourth Book of Malory's Morte Darthur," Medium Aevum, 2 (1933), 202. Vinaver, Works, pp. 1360-62.

[23] Roger Boase, The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977).

[24] Huizinga, p. 199.

responsibility in love affairs which courtesy requires. Gawain devises a plan to enter Ettard's castle, so that he may cause her to "cheryshe" him, swearing an oath of friendship for his knightly companion, King Pelleas. When Pelleas discovers the happy lovers in a pavilion, "his hert well-nyghe braste for sorow." He is tempted to destroy "the hyghe Ordir of Knyghthode" by killing his sworn brother (p. 170). After a moral struggle,[25] he reminds Gawain of his duty to a friend by laying his "naked swerde overthrawte bothe their throtis" (p. 170). "Pelleas was not prepared to forgo, without a severe internal struggle, the vengeance that the exigencies of the story forbade him to take," Whitehead says.[26] The noble Pelleas instead of indulging in violence, makes a symbolic gesture to remind Gawain that he lacks courtesy, showing a number of the characteristics of a courteous knight, in contrast to Gawain.

Pelleas is a faithful lover, loyal to fellow knights and to his code, courageous and skillful in battle. He chooses a lady who is not worthy of him, but Malory changes the resolution of the tragedy to reward Pelleas for his good qualities. In the source, Ettard has second thoughts and with the consent of Gawain she takes Pelleas as her lover.[27] Malory changes this frivolous resolution by giving him a different, worthy lady, one who is concerned about the

---

[25] Pelleas returns to the pavilion, intending to kill Gawain, but the "unworthy action repels him." He goes home to die. See Whitehead, "On Certain Aspects in the Fourth Book of Malory's Morte Darthur," pp. 200-4.

[26] Whitehead, p. 205.

[27] Whitehead, p. 204.

welfare of a good knight, loyal and aware that "vertuous" love must be "stable." Several times in later books Malory reinforces the lesson of this tale, suggesting that faithful love is an important virtue of King Arthur's society. Wicked Ettard is punished in Malory,[28] whereas Pelleas rejoices in the true love of Nineve, the "Damesell of the Lake." Ettard's punishment, to love Pelleas "so sore" that she is "nere oute of hir mynde," is called "the ryghteuouse jugemente of God" by Nineve, who counsels Pelleas to "com forthwith oute of this contrey" with her (p. 172). She spends the life remaining to her creating happiness for her worthy knight.

Faithful love is central to the famous tragedy of Tristram and Isolde in Morte Darthur. Malory lessens the impact of Tristram's marriage with the second Isolde somewhat by stressing that his first love, La Belle Isolde, sends him to Brittany to be healed and that his second marriage, arranged by King Howell and his son, is recognized immediately by Tristram as a great mistake. Tristram "had never ado with hir" but even so, Lancelot is angry. "Fye uppon hym, untrew knyght to his lady!" he says. Lancelot swears to be Tristram's "mortall enemy" (p. 435), and Guenevere, in a letter to Isolde, insists that "sorsery" must have been involved to make Tristram forsake his true love. She predicts his return to his lady because he is "so noble a knight" (p. 436). Tristram's predicament at King

---

[28] She dies of sorrow.

Mark's court is almost justified, because of the despicable behaviour of the uncourteous Mark in Morte Darthur.

Malory alters King Mark's history to stress the effect of false love on members of the court of Cornwall. Unlike the French prose version of the Tristram legend, Malory's tale shows King Mark, in the early portions of his history, concerned about his nephew's well-being, sending for "lechis" and providing "a fayre vessell and well vytaled" (p. 384) for his journey to seek a cure. The first argument between uncle and nephew occurs over the favours of the wife of Sir Segwarides. The enmity between the two increases as the affair of Tristram and Isolde develops, Mark becoming treacherous in the extreme. His own knights remark on his untrustworthiness, a new trait closely related to his jealousy and the intrigues of lovers. Courtesy, lacking in King Mark and also in his subjects who have no one to look up to as an example of ideal behaviour, clearly involves the proper perspective in relation to virtuous love and loyalty.

At King Mark's court, courtly love is a debased game, in which a knight requests of Mark "the fayreste lady in your courte" (p. 396), who happens to be married but who is willing to play the game. Sir Bleoberys accepts the gift of Sir Segwarides' wife and blames Tristram for not claiming her himself: "Ye ar in the blame, for I hyre by this ladyes wordis that she trusted you abovyn all erthely knyghtes, and, as she seyth, ye have dysseyved hir," he says (p. 402). The lady refuses Tristram's protection, when finally offered

but accepts Bleoberys as her guardian on the way back to the abbey where Sir Segwarides lies wounded by his wife's abductor. Tristram accepts his lesson concerning the wisdom of true love, having been rebuked by one lady, shamed by Sir Segwarides' wife and finally taught to "beware what maner of lady he should love or trust" (p. 402). Sir Segwarides is comforted by Tristram's courteous return of his wife.

In the "Tale of Tristram," Tristram is a rare example of a courteous knight who is connected with the court of King Mark. He spends his life in exile from his uncle's court, frequently enjoying the hospitality offered him in King Arthur's land. Malory shows many parallels between Lancelot and Tristram, similarities which emphasize the differences in their courtly experiences.

The unpleasant story of Lamerok's liaison with King Lot's wife and his subsequent shameful death takes its place with these events outside the court of King Arthur. It is adultery that causes the Lot-Pellinore feud to flare up again, endangering the stability of Arthur's court. Lamerok's death is referred to several times, gaining importance each time it is mentioned and underlining the consequences of adulterous affairs on the progress of this tale, especially when it is combined with the theme of vengeance.

In Morte Darthur Tristram's reputation suffers more from his ability to forget La Belle Isolde for Isolde of the White Hands than from his adulterous liaison with his

uncle's wife. Lancelot, in particular, is offended by his actions, so much so that he creates ill fame for his former friend. So long as Tristram remains a true lover he is welcome in King Arthur's court, especially since he is "the knyght of moste reverence in the world lyvynge" (p. 679). Percival, who becomes one of the knights to achieve the Holy Grail in recognition of his faith and humility, can never accept his adultery, however, and prefers to think that Tristram loves Isolde "synles" because she is fair. In a conversation with King Mark Percival points out the obvious flaw in Tristram's relationship with the Queen of Cornwall:

> "A, fy for shame! . . . Sey ye never so more! For ar nat ye uncle unto sir Trystram? And be youre neveaw ye sholde never thynke that so noble a knyght as sir Trystram is, that he wolde do hymselff so grete vylany to holde his unclys wyff." (p. 679)[2']

Tristram openly travels to Arthur's court with Isolde, whom Malory refers to as "the quene" (p. 722). He also spends "a sevennyght" at Joyous Gard with her after the tournament at Lonezep. Guenevere is obviously impressed by Isolde's power over her knight, expressing a wish to have "parte of her condycions" (p. 764), although she is still aware, at this point, of the dangers of an adulterous love affair, as she delivers a speech condemning Palomide's envy of another knight's lady:

[2'] Percival also chastizes a lady: "A madame what use and custom is that in a lady to destroy good knyghtes but yf they woll be youre paramour? Perde, this is a shameful custom of a lady" (p. 814). Vinaver notes that this remark is not in the French (p. 1529).

> "Than shall he never wynne worshyp," seyde the quene, "for and hyt happyn an envyous man onys to wynne worshyp, he shall be dishonoured twyse therefore. And for this cause all men of worshyp hate an envyous man and woll shewe hym no favoure, and he that ys curteyse and kynde and jantil hath favoure in every place." (p. 764)

Palomides, the knight who gives up the struggle to reconcile the demands of courtly love with those of feudal loyalty, bemoans the loss of a brother in Tristram, who is his rival for Isolde. He has previously been led to do battle with his real brother, Sir Saphir, in an attempt to advance a friend's love affair and for that incident faces a shameful death when condemned by a jury of twelve knights. Tristram's noble nature rises above the pettiness of courtly quarrels over ladies as he prepares to rescue Palomides from his judges. Before Sir Tristram arrives at the execution place, however, Lancelot takes the matter in hand and saves the good knight, Palomides, from death. Courteous knights rally to protect their brother, setting aside their disapproval of his behaviour in love. Palomides continues to lament publicly his hopeless love, forcing Tristram to do battle to save Isolde's honour. Two of the best knights in the world endanger their lives for King Mark's queen, the immorality of the situation highlighted by an accident which occurs before the joust. Tristram is injured by an arrow, an incident which postpones the need for a contest.[30] Palomides declares himself glad that fate has intervened:

---

[30] This incident has a parallel in Lancelot's life at a significant moment when he is prevented from fighting for Guenevere's honour while wearing her gold sleeve (p. 1104).

> "For I wote well," he says, "and we had medled, I sholde have had harde handelynge of hym, and by lyklyhode I muste nedys have had the worse. For he is the hardyeste knyght in batayle that now ys lyvynge excepte sir Launcelot." (p. 784)

Tristram recovers to spend his days hunting for his opponent, amassing great fame in the process. Lancelot's friends become jealous on his behalf because Tristram's renown increases but Lancelot will not condone jealousy. Lancelot exhibits his unselfish, courteous nature and refuses to allow discourteous jealousy over honourably earned renown. The enmity between Palomides and Tristram ends when each has refused to take advantage of the other in a joust, mutual respect of knightly characteristics taking precedence over love quarrels. Palomides begs forgiveness of Tristram and then of God. He becomes a Christian, with Sir Tristram and Sir Galleron as his godfathers.

Tristram, in Malory's tale, spends more time proving his worth as a knight than he does enjoying his earlier fame as a great lover. Malory believes in virtuous love as a part of courtesy, but knights must concern themselves first with their reponsibilities as the ruling class in society. Lancelot and Tristram are the best knights in the world, as they prove when they meet in single combat, not recognizing one another. The battle is a draw and each pays homage to the other's prowess in a ritual of yielding his sword to his brother knight, a gesture of trust and respect.

Tristram's understanding of the principles of courtesy is the quality which makes him welcome at King Arthur's

court when other Cornish knights are not respected and King Mark's reputation is very low.[31] The unfortunate end to this love affair occurs off-stage and is called treason. Tristram, slain in his own household as he engages in the courteous pastime of playing his harp in the company of his lady, is a tragic victim of King Mark's lack of courtesy. This incident is linked with Lamerok's death at the hands of Gawain and his brothers. Adultery and vengeance are at the root of the destruction of both worthy knights, a connection mentioned regretfully in the nostalgic recapitulation of events at the ritual healing of Sir Urry. Moorman believes that Malory "unequivocably condemns courtly love throughout his book by emphasizing its tragic consequences."[32] At the least he shows distaste for its artificiality, rejecting the game and praising a more lasting love he calls "vertuous love."[33] Courtesy is the remedy for most of the ills of society, symbolized by two important ones, adultery and vengeance, which in Malory's ideal court stand for lack of restraint or moderation, the first great lesson King Arthur learns from Merlin concerning the courtesy of rulers.

---

[31] Thomas Rumble, "The Tale of Tristram," in Lumiansky, p. 158. Tristram and Isolde escape while Dynas, the seneschal, holds Mark in prison because Dynas "undirstood the treson of kynge Marke" (p. 680). Sir Lancelot "charged all his people to honoure them and love them as they wolde do hymselff,"in his usual courteous fashion (p. 681). See also p. 785.

[32] Charles Moorman, The Book of Kyng Arthur: The Unity of Malory's Morte Darthur (Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), p. 27.

[33] P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," in Essays on Malory, ed. R. A. W. Bennett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p. 79.

The formality of the courtly ethos is expressed in patterns of gesture and speech that regulate communication. Respect, affection, pity and all the noble sentiments of courtesy, are dramatized in their courtly gestures. Arthur takes his guests "by the hond" (p. 862), [34] seats them according to rank and "worship" (p. 102), provides for their comfort and security and kisses them affectionately. Galahad is placed in Arthur's own bed and the visiting senators from Rome are treated as nobles deserve. The king provides elaborate tournaments and feasts to celebrate marriage, to mark acceptance of new knights and to allow the formal expression of "joy and mirth" which courtesy demands.[35] Gestures such as wearing the sleeve of the lady and exchanging rings are honoured and welcome and farewell rituals are formal and elaborate. Respect for ladies includes a ritual kiss. Lancelot says to Guenevere that he may lose no worship by kissing her. He adds, "And wyte you well, and I undirstood there were ony disworshyp for to kysse you, I wold nat do hit" (p. 1136). Homage is paid, with ceremony, and the laying on of hands is practised in a solemn ritual in which Lancelot proves that he is the best knight of "erthely" knights. Kneeling is an observance which shows humility or supplication. Galahad kneels for communion, as does the queen in supplication before Sir Bors; at the "Healing of Sir Urry" kneeling by all the

---

[34] Chastellain, "Chroniques du bon chevalier Messire Jacques de Lalain," p. 645.

[35] Dupin, p. 75.

knights is stressed as a ritual action. The respect noble knights owe one another is illustrated by the ritual Tristram and Lancelot follow after a duel:

> And therewyth sir Launcelott kneled adowne and yeldid hym up his swerde. And therewithall sir Trystram kneled adowne and yeldid hym up his swerde, and so aythir gaff other the gre. And than they bothe forthwithall went to the stone and set hem downe uppon hit and toke of their helmys to keele them, and aythir kyste other an hondred tymes. (p. 569)

Language used by knights in Morte Darthur is formal and indicates the same virtues of respect for the welfare of others, generosity, pity and dependability which gestures show. Dignified behaviour of knights demonstrates self-control and is a characteristic of all courteous speech.[36] Formulaic speech, also characteristic of knights, suggests that there are distinctive features common to all those who demonstrate courtesy.[37] "Ye sey welle" is an expression used to show appreciation for acceptance of the rules of courteous speech[38] and "that is trouthe" is another.[39] "What ar ye?" and "telle me thy name" are frequent questions that show concern for a "good" name. "In good feyth,"[40] and "with good wyll,"[41] demonstrate the importance of truth, loyalty and trust. Gareth speaks

---

[36] P. C. Field, Romance and Chronicle (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1971), pp. 114-118.

[37] Field, pp. 107-108.

[38] Examples in the text can be found on pp. 31, 53, 62, 65.

[39] See pp. 61, 74, 97, 399.

[40] pp. 62, 64, 78, 261.

[41] pp. 113, 264, 399, 401.

"knyghtly" and Lancelot is recognized by his speech, which is typical of knights, although it is perhaps more courteous than most and abounds in expressions such as "Gramercy," "ye ar welcom," "truly," "I pray you," "God thank the," that identify knights throughout Morte Darthur.

The courtly love affair in which Lancelot, the most courteous knight, becomes involved is a reminder that life is not controlled entirely by man. Drawn through loyalty to his lady into a confrontation with his brother knights, Lancelot foresees the problem which he will have when he opposes his friends to rescue Guenevere from the stake. He says, "peradventure I shall there destroy som of my beste fryndis, and that shold moche repente me" (p. 1172). He actually kills the younger brothers of Gawain, one of them being Gareth, his loyal friend and perfect product of Arthur's courtly school for knights. The dangerous need for vengeance then flares up in Gareth's brother, Gawain, whose fearful temper King Arthur knows "woll cause the grettist mortall warre that ever was," which will never stop until Arthur has "destroyed sir Launcelottys kynne and hymselff bothe, othir ellis he to destroy me" (p. 1183).

Loyalty to his king remains strong in Lancelot during Arthur's siege of Joyous Gard. His reluctance to engage King Arthur and Gawain in personal combat is striking. The best knight says, "God deffende me . . . that ever I shulde encounter wyth the moste noble kynge that made me knyght" (p. 1187). He begs that Arthur and Gawain "com nat into the

fylde" (p. 1191). Lancelot helps King Arthur onto his horse, in the middle of the battle and twice refuses to kill Gawain, although he has him at his mercy. Lancelot's actions are controlled by devotion to courtesy, developed at King Arthur's court. Eugene Vinaver describes this devotion:

> The essential quality which gives such action its tragic power is that at no point does it appear fortuitous; it arises not from the accidents of human life, nor from the momentary weaknesses of the protagonists, but from the depths of their noblest passions, from the uncompromising sincerity of their devotion to a chosen aim. (p. 1625)

Loyalty is stressed in the practice of courtesy. The most courteous knight, Sir Lancelot, is the most loyal knight. Ironically it is his ability to inspire loyalty in others and to retain loyal knights in his train after the split with Arthur that endangers the unity of the Round Table society. Many of the best knights of the court, although they are torn by loyalty to the king, follow Lancelot, attracted by his near-perfect knightly qualities. Deprived of the strength represented by his best knights, Arthur's remaining followers are in danger of losing a confrontation. Arthur is aware of the strength of the bond of knighthood and values it highly. In his final battle the king is most concerned about the loss of his knights and the power they represent. Before the battle he actually receives a significant dream warning that he should wait to avenge himself on Mordred, after the fellowship is complete again when Lancelot returns to Logres.

Lancelot's loyalty to his king remains strong to the end of his life, when he dies "grovelynge on the tombe of kyng Arthur and quene Guenever" (p. 1257), his love for his lady being a separate complication. When the jealous queen banishes Lancelot from the court, causing him "grete hevynes," Sir Bors counsels him not to leave the country altogether, for he says, "ye muste remembir you what ye ar, and renomed the moste nobelyst knyght of the worlde, and many grete maters ye have in honde" (p. 1047). The court needs Lancelot, quite apart from his close personal ties with the queen. The king asks the queen impatiently, "what aylith you . . . that ye can nat kepe sir Launcelot uppon youre syde?" (p. 1051) He knows the importance of having "the moste man of worship in thys worlde uppon hys syde" (p. 1051) and is willing to overlook emotional imbalances to preserve his court. As Arthur's single-minded devotion to his ideal society becomes distracted by irritation with the queen and her lover, King Arthur forgets this importance momentarily and angrily reacts to Lancelot's "unstable" behaviour. The king believes that courtly love with its tendency to adultery and secrecy has the power to distract a knight from his duties.

The queen, who is a leader of courtly behaviour and instructs knights in their duties, has the beauty which indicates noble worth and the dignity which allows her to provide a worthy example of courtesy. She shows devotion to her duty as a teacher and protectoress of "fame" when she

returns Lancelot's sword to him at a tournament during which he would have been shamed if his queen had not taken pity on him. Lancelot credits this act for inspiring his undying loyalty to Arthur's queen. Guenevere develops rituals, for example, when she and her knights enjoy a Maying expedition and when she arranges a dinner for her knights. Guenevere possesses a talent for organization which, at the end of her life, equips her to become the abbess at Amesbury, and she takes an honoured place at tournaments and festivals, inspiring knights to achieve greater prowess. Guenevere's responsible position at court promotes the duty of the knight to serve ladies, a task which often involves aid to the helpless or oppressed. Distressed ladies appeal to knights of the Round Table for help in a variety of causes, in regaining lost lands, removing swords, catching escaped hawks, rescuing them from wicked pursuers and in assisting their unfortunate knights. Gareth rescues a lady besieged in her castle as his first adventure, falls in love with the lady and then marries her. Serving ladies is an important part of courtesy, and whenever a serious problem occurs in the land, King Arthur and his knights are requested to help.

Examples of courteous knights who train under King Arthur and his queen are numerous. Lancelot and Gareth head the list of illustrious courtiers but there are many more -- Torre, Urry, Pelleas and La Cote Male Tayle to name a few. Each of these young protégés follows a similar quest during which he hopes to attain a level of perfection in the

behaviour appropriate for a knight.

The greatest knight, Lancelot, has pressures to withstand in his struggle to fulfill all the requirements of courtesy. The complexity of his ideal behaviour creates conflicts in duties toward his king, society, fellow knights and ladies. Guenevere's jealousy of Elaine, the mother of Galahad, is behind the increasing demands she places on her loyal knight. Malory is careful to stress the supernatural "dealing" of Dame Brusen, Elaine's lady, who arranges the circumstances of Lancelot's "enchauntemente," with the blessing of Elaine's father, King Pelles, who is "cousyn nyghe unto Joseph of Aramathy" (p. 793). Lancelot's part in this episode in the history of mankind is involuntary, caused by Dame Brusen's "kuppe of wyne"; therefore, he remains loyal to Guenevere in spite of being the father of Galahad. Malory says that Lancelot "wente that mayden Elayne had bene quene Guenyver" (p. 795), his only recognition of Elaine's personal charms being his forgiveness after the fact when, out of kindness, "he toke her up in his armys and kyssed her, for she was a fayre lady" (p. 796). This courtly gesture shows his pity for the noble lady who loves him.

As the disguised knight who plays the game of courtly love by wearing Elaine of Astolat's sleeve in a desire to show off or win worship for vainglory and pride, Lancelot falls back into the sin he has forsaken in the recent Grail quest. Lancelot, at the Great Tournament, pits his strength against that of his fellows, incurring King Arthur's wrath.

Bors and Gareth sadly witness the contest, and Gareth, the eager young knight, hastily disguises himself to join "my lorde sir Launcelot for to helpe hym whatsomever me betyde" (p. 1110) because of knightly loyalty. The king upbraids him for leaving the court party to support his friend but Gareth defends his loyalty to Lancelot. Arthur is forced to agree, after thinking it over, telling Gareth,

> ". . . ye say well, and worshypfully have ye done, and to youreselff grete worshyp. And all the dayes of my lyff," . . . "wyte you well I shall love you and truste you the more bettir. For ever hit ys," . . . "a worshypfull knyghtes dede to help and succoure another worshypfull knyght whan he seeth hym in daungere. For ever a worshypfull man woll be lothe to se a worshypfull man shamed, and he that ys of no worshyp and medelyth with cowardise never shall he shew jantilnes nor no maner of goodnes where he seeth a man in daungere, for than woll a cowarde never shew mercy. And allwayes a good man woll do ever to another man as he wolde be done to hymselff." (p. 1114)

Personal loyalties are important afterall and some weighing of the circumstances is always necessary. A good knight must be, first of all, a good man.

It is Lancelot's ability to show joy which makes him join in all the courtly games,[42] although when Lancelot capitulates to Elaine of Astolat's request to fight in her name, wearing a red sleeve on his helmet, he has never before "bare tokyn or sygne of maydyn, lady, nothir jantillwoman," Bors declares (p. 1081). Another motive for his actions complicates this incident. In his desire to

---

[42] Dupin, p. 75.

prove his prowess for Guenevere who has banished him from court, Arthur's best knight recklessly agrees to follow the conventions of courtly love, in "pryde and bobbaunce" (p. 1081), receiving a severe wound from Bors, who does not recognize "oure ledar" (p. 1083). Lancelot's behaviour wavers from the responsible position he usually takes. Elaine's great love for Lancelot, being immoderate and not at all courtly, despite her request concerning the sleeve, causes her to lose all sense of pride. She begs Lancelot to marry her, or be her paramour, creating a shocking dilemma for him. He may not, as an honourable knight, repay her father and brother "full evyll for their grete goodnesse," he tells her (p. 1089). Lancelot is kind, courteous and helpful to ladies, as he proves many times. However, he is not interested in marriage as he tells Elaine, nor will he be her paramour. He is generous, offering "a thousand pounde yerly, to you and to youre ayris," in gratitude for her "good wylle and kyndnes" (p. 1089) but his loyalty to his only love, the queen, makes marriage, or a courtly liaison with Elaine impossible. When Elaine dies from unrequited love, Lancelot defends his position to Arthur:

> "My lorde Arthur, wyte you well I am ryght hevy of the deth of thys fayre lady. And God knowyth I was never causar of her deth be my wyllynge,. . . but she loved me oute of mesure." (p. 1097)

Lancelot insists that "I love nat to be constrayned to love, for love muste only aryse of the harte selff, and nat by none constraynte," a sentiment which Arthur endorses (p.

1097). It is part of Lancelot's tragedy that he is destined to love Guenevere rather than either of the Elaines who would have been suitable partners in a virtuous marriage.

The courteous knight is a leader in society who is inspired by his lady but who remains responsible for her welfare. Ladies, it was believed, were less able to control their emotions and therefore in greater need of outside restraints.[43] Guenevere has difficulty in understanding the necessity for Lancelot's involvement with Elaine and banishes him from court. Shocked by his own apparent disloyalty to Guenevere and by loss of the queen's love Lancelot runs mad in the woods for a space of two years.[44] Lancelot mourns his loss of the queen's love all this time but remains in exile as self-punishment.

Lancelot's loyalty to his king is challenged by his love for the queen. His loyalty in love is proven in three tests when Lancelot defends Guenevere against charges of treason. On the first occasion, when she is innocent of poisoning Sir Patrice, Lancelot easily defeats his challenger, Sir Mador. On the second occasion, when she is technically innocent of the charge of sleeping with one of her wounded knights, Lancelot defeats Melleagaunce. In this encounter he departs from his code by refusing mercy. On the third occasion Lancelot abducts the queen to save her from burning at the stake. She is guilty in this final episode,

---

[43] C. C. Mierow, trans., The Letters of St. Jerome (New York: Newman Press, 1963), 1, #22. See also St. Paul's Letter to the Colossians III, 18-20.

[44] Kennedy, p. 431.

but Lancelot defends his lady in wrong as well as right.

The courtesy of knights, exemplified by Lancelot, contains the formula and the ideal which Malory believes in as a guide to moral behaviour. Lancelot's qualities, described by Sir Ector, illustrate the highest achievement of human behaviour and deserve to studied, Malory believes, for the improvement of society. Gestures, language and ritual ceremonies at court dramatize the beliefs which underlie the true meaning of the courtesy of secular knights. The courtesy of knights includes dedication to ideals formed when the feudal relationships of lord and vassal controlled communication between knights. Courage, loyalty, concern for personal renown, generosity and respect for precedence are basic to the aims of knighthood. Service to ladies, including kindness, polite speech, good table manners, cleanliness and the courtly concerns for education in art, literature and music, all helpful in creating an example of beautiful order which all members of society should imitate as well as they can, are also essential. Stable marriages which protect "vertuous" love are important in Malory's interpretation of courtesy. Christian ideals direct the entire complex of virtues, with mercy for opponents and duty to God the guiding principles for courteous knights in Morte Darthur.

IV. The Courtesy of Christians

Malory's "Tale of the Sankgreal" raises one important aspect of courtesy beyond the social, worldly concerns of manners. Ideally courtesy involves not only communication of knights with their king, with peers and with ladies but also with God. The purely spiritual nature of the Grail quest is indicated by the stress on chastity as a requirement for participating knights. There is no place for women in the world of the Grail except as sacrificial figures, such as Percival's sister, or recluses, like Percival's aunt. The perfect chastity, faith and obedience necessary for this special quest are beyond the stern resolve of most worldly knights but as inspiration for courtesy, they provide goals which give direction to the courtly ideal.

The legend of the Grail quest which Malory incorporates in his tale of King Arthur's court was linked with stories of King Arthur by the twelfth century. [1] His source, which he follows closely,[2] is the Queste del Saint Graal, from the

---

[1] R. Lumiansky, Malory's Originality (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), pp. 186-7. F. Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966), pp. 5,13, Chap. 2 and 9. J. D. Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance to 1300, 2nd ed. (Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1958), II, 129. R. S. Loomis, The Grail from Celtic Myth to Christian Symbol (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1963), p. 3.

[2] Vinaver, Works, p. 1534. Vida Scudder, Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory (New York: Haskell House, 1965), pp. 79-99. C. S. Lewis, "The English Prose Morte," in Essays, ed. J. A. W. Bennett, p. 17.

French Vulgate cycle, written between 1214 and 1227.[3] The French Queste is an allegorical pilgrimage in which chivalric adventures of Round Table knights symbolize the obstacles encountered by mankind in his search for divine grace.[4] Secular chivalry is condemned and a new "celestial" chivalry is advocated. Jean Frappier calls the Queste "un traite de vie dévote."[5] Malory changes the message of his source, suggesting that a "trew" knight who follows the strict rules of Christian courtesy travels an alternate route, through "vertuous lyvyng" (p. 886). It is possible, he believes, to visualize an ideal which will include the virtues of worldly courtesy with Christian courtesy.[6]

A condensed history of the Christian church provides a framework for the allegorical message of the Queste del Saint Graal in Malory's Morte Darthur. Represented by the figures of two ladies, an old lady called Synagoga, often blindfolded and carrying a broken staff, and a young lady called Ecclesia, carrying a cross, a chalice or a banner,[7] the history of the Christian church provides a solid base for the mysticism represented by the Grail. After the Fall, when man was expelled from the Garden of Eden, his direct

---

[3] Albert Pauphilet, Etudes sur la Queste del Saint Graal (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1968), pp. 11-12.

[4] Pauphilet, pp. 37,46. Bennett, Essays, pp. 82-93. Charles Moorman, The Book of Kyng Arthur (Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), pp. 28-48.

[5] Jean Frappier, Autour du Graal (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1977), p. 90.

[6] D. S. Brewer, "The hoole book," in Essays, p. 58.

[7] Pauphilet, Etudes, pp. 153-4.
G. G. Sill, A Handbook of Symbols in Christian Art (New York: Collier Books, 1975), p. 28.

communication with God was withdrawn. Man was doomed to struggle alone with his knowledge of good and evil as punishment for disobedience. When God took pity on man and sent his Son as a sacrifice to expiate the sins of mankind, Ecclesia, or the New Law, led the way to redemption. A change in the relationship between God and man occurred and direct communication became possible again through the Holy Spirit in a ritual "communion" service. Christian courtesy never loses sight of this gift and honours it through repetition of the mass, as the Cistercian monk, author of Malory's source for the "Tale of the Sankgreal" continually reminds his audience.[8]

The story of the quest for the Holy Grail rests on a prediction that a Grail knight will appear at a special moment in history.[9] Malory's "Tale of the Sankgreal" begins with Galahad's arrival at King Arthur's Court, an event predicted by Merlin and closely related to the life of the best "erthely" knight, his father, Sir Lancelot. The spirituality of Christian courtesy is evident in the tone and the style of Malory's writing in this section, as it is in the "Healing of Sir Urry."[10] The special qualities of Christian courtesy are also stressed through the simplified picture of Galahad, a figure of concentrated devotion to his appointed task.[11]

---

[8] Pauphilet, p. 102.

[9] Bogdanow, Introduction. Pauphilet, pp. 3ff. F. Locke, The Quest for the Holy Grail (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960), p. 15.

[10] Scudder, p. 333.

[11] Charles Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreal," in

Galahad has no need to struggle against human desires for worldly prowess, the admiration of beautiful ladies, or vengeance, as so many Round Table knights do. His perfection is as different as his short life is different from the usual varied life of a knight. Galahad communicates intimately with God and man and embodies all the virtues possible in "erthely" and "hevenly" knighthood.'[12] He is invincible in battle, courageous and serves ladies gracefully. Capable of human tenderness and love for his companions, he practises the courteous behaviour for which knights of the Round Table are famous. Malory achieves an important effect by equating his symbol of knightly perfection with the perfect practice of courtesy. Although the Christian ideal is beyond the ability of earthly knights like Lancelot to imitate exactly, it remains an inspiration for the best features of courtesy.

Galahad's adventures also provide new proof that the divine plan for mankind includes employment of human agents to lead the way in moral behaviour. The duty of the ruling class is to recognize their role and try to live up to it. The adventures Galahad encounters provide access to tasks he is predestined to accomplish, unlike those of other knights whose faith is tested. As a knight errant he proceeds through a land where the mass is not heard and old chapels are desolate, although miracles occur within them once

---

'1 (cont'd)Lumiansky, p. 197.
'2 Pauphilet, p. 140.

Christian knights searching for the Holy Grail enter their doors. Galahad accepts instructions directly from Heaven, re-enacting the Harrowing of Hell as a symbolic reminder of the Christian promise of redemption in the adventure of the Castle of Maidens. He obediently drives away seven wicked brothers who have imprisoned, not only maidens within the castle but "so muche people in the stretys that he myght nat numbir them." These people, the narrator comments,

> . . . betokenyth the good soulys that were in preson before the Incarnacion of oure Lorde Jesu Cryste. And the seven knyghtes betokenyth the seven dedly synnes that regned that tyme in the worlde. And I may lyckyn the good knyght Galahad unto the Sonne of the Hyghe Fadir that lyght within a maydyn and bought all the soules oute of thralle: so ded sir Galahad delyver all the maydyns oute of the woofull castell. . . . (p. 892)

Galahad reveals a higher purpose in life and the real importance of the Round Table in its setting at King Arthur's court.

In Galahad's appearance at court King Arthur recognizes a prophecy of the end of a great era and mourns the approaching loss of fellowship. He fears that many of his knights, trained to accomplish great deeds in the name of chivalry and for their king, will not be prepared for this new adventure.

Courtesy sustains them better, as Malory shows, than purely chivalric traditions would have. The virtues peculiar to Round Table knights who are famous for their courtesy are those which enable the few who succeed in the Grail quest to

survive spiritual tests. The most courteous knights are the most spiritually advanced. Galahad, specially attached to the Round Table to complete it, is followed by Percival, Bors and Lancelot, all conscientious in every aspect of courtesy. Those knights who fail in important virtues such as humility, pity, service to ladies and worship of God are the first to drop out of the quest. The restoration of the Grail is a temporary achievement, however, and those who are pure and perfectly able to achieve heavenly communication leave the world soon after success is gained. Galahad's request that he be allowed to join his heavenly Father is granted. Percival follows him within a short period of time. Only Bors survives to bear witness to the truth of their adventures and to sustain Lancelot through the tribulations that have been caused partly by his own shortcomings and partly by fate.

The quest for the Holy Grail provides satisfaction for Galahad, fullfills prophecy and heals the Maimed King, among other marvels, but ordinary knights find confusion and a discouraging lack of adventures. Malory uses the spiritual adventures of Round Table knights to give depth to their characterization[13] while showing that true courtesy is more than outward appearance or a code of behaviour. It springs, instead, from sincere attempts by the ruling class to improve themselves as an example for society. Galahad succeeds where others fail and in so doing provides lessons

---

[13] Scudder, p. 280.

in humility, patience, obedience and determination to improve conditions according to a code approved by a higher justice.

Percival, chaste like Galahad, has marvellous adventures in the quest, proving that his faith is sufficient for the test. He is guided from the first by his aunt, a saintly lady who has given up her worldly goods. She was "somtyme the Quene of the Wast Londis," possessed "of moste rychesse in the worlde" (p. 905) but her new spirituality pleases her more. She knows what the Round Table signifies and she reproves her nephew for his eagerness to engage Galahad in a duel as a way of communicating with him. Percival vows, "be my good wyll I woll never have ado with sir Galahad but by way of goodnesse," after he has been advised that Galahad "hath no peere, for he worchith all by myracle" (p. 907). The Castle of Corbenic, where the Maimed King lies waiting to be healed, is the place where Galahad's whereabouts are known, and Percival rides out to find Galahad if he can.

Percival's adventures allow his knowledge concerning the wonders of a divine plan to accumulate gradually as his faith is tested. In a monastery he learns about King Evelake and his history, which involves founding of the English church. When he leaves the monastery and is assaulted by twenty knights as seven at once "smote uppon hys shylde" (p. 909), he is fortified through prayer and participation in the mass. His horse is killed, leaving him humbled, on foot.

Galahad appears in his "rede armys,"[14] and "by adventure," in time to save his life but he disappears again, leaving Percival to struggle alone against temptation. Supernatural fiends disguised as knights and yeomen tempt Percival to break his code of honour to provide himself with a horse, a symbol of knightly pride in these spiritual adventures. The knight distinguishes himself from lower classes by riding a powerful war horse in battle, an advantage which increases his effectiveness and power over others. Percival refuses to take a knight's horse dishonourably but accepts the offer of a hackney, less fine in appearance. When even this horse is killed, he throws away his worldly armour, his shield, a symbol of honour, his helm, as protection against shame and his sword, a symbol of power.'[15] Worldly symbols of power must be relinquished in spiritual adventures, where humility is the important virtue. Placing himself at the mercy of God, Percival submits to a terrifying ride on a huge black horse, which "within an owre and lasse" takes him on a four day's journey to the brink of a "rowghe watir whych rored" (p. 912).'[16] When Percival, remembering his faith, crosses himself, the horse runs "into the watir cryynge [and rorynge] and makyng grete sorowe, and hit seemed unto hym that the watir brente" (p. 912). Percival has been saved

---

[14] Pauphilet, p. 108, for a discussion of the symbolism of colours.

[15] William Caxton, trans., The Ordre of Chivalry, from a French version of Ramon Lull's "Le Libre del Orde de Cauayleria," ed. A. Byles (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), p. 77.

[16] Pauphilet, p. 112, discusses the symbolism of black horses.

from a fiend by the power of his faith and he remembers to thank God. Temptation in a wilderness on a strange mountain inhabited by wild beasts forces him to make more difficult decisions. Percival relies on his Christian instincts and courteously helps a more "natural" creature, a lion, to save its young from an attack by a serpent.'' He is rewarded by the lionesse which "went allwey aboute hym fawnynge as a spaynell" and which keeps him company during the long, cold night "cowched downe at his feet" (p. 913). In a strange dream, Percival refuses the dishonourable advances of an old lady riding on a serpent while a young lady riding on a lion warns him to prepare for a meeting with "the stronge[st] champion of the worlde" (p. 913). An angel interprets this dream as an allegorical history of the church. The young lady riding on the lion

> . . . betokenyth the new law of Holy Chirche, that is to undirstonde fayth, good hope, belyeve and baptyme; for she semed yonger [than] that othir hit ys grete reson, for she was borne in the Resurreccion and the Passion of oure Lorde Jesu Cryste. (p. 915)

The old lady "signifieth the olde law, and that serpente betokenyth a fynde" (p. 915); her request was a demand to renounce his baptism. The ideals of courtesy must reflect basic truths, because they prevent Percival, once more, from making an error which could endanger his soul.

'' Pauphilet, p. 111, mentions the serpent, or devil, symbolism.

Temptations resembling situations frequently faced by knights tempt Percival to rest from his quest. However, his faith does not waver even when he is confronted with the arch fiend in the form of a beautiful lady who appeals to his worldly vow to serve ladies. Lulled by luxurious surroundings, meat and strong wine, Percival very nearly loses his chastity,'[8] essential in the Grail quest but is saved at the last by looking at his sword. Reminded of his duty by the red cross on the pomell, Percival crosses himself, creating destruction for the fiend and for the illusory temptations which again disappear in a cloud of smoke. Even the "mayster fyende of helle" (p. 920) fails to corrupt the chaste Percival. After this encounter proves his moral strength, Percival is transported by a magic ship to Corbenic, where he achieves the Holy Grail.

On the ship Percival is joined by Bors. The spiritual strength of this second knight who achieves the Holy Grail is especially significant because he returns to King Arthur's court and resumes the life of a knight. Bors remains faithful to Lancelot, supporting him to the end of his life. The testing which Bors has survived to gain access to the magic ship has presented him with difficult choices in the matter of loyalties and the duty of a knight to help those in distress. In his first test he accepts a challenge to defend a young lady who has been disinherited by an older woman. Bors volunteers immediately, without question, to aid

---

'[8] See Pauphilet, p. 39, on Percival's chastity.

her,'[19] as a courteous knight is bound to do. He defeats the challenging knight and grants mercy, an admirable act, but not different from his usual secular pattern. The young lady "com to her estate agayn be the myghty prouesse of sir Bors de Ganys" (p. 960), whose purity and steadfastness have made him invincible. Bors has been engaged as a Christian knight fighting to maintain the New Law, or Ecclesia, when challenged by the Old Law, he discovers later. His courtesy, with underlying virtues based on Christian love and charity, carries him through the adventure unscathed.

The second class of loyalties creates greater anguish for Bors, who must leave his brother "all naked, bounden uppo[n] a stronge hakeney, and his hondis bounden tofore hys breste" (p. 960), while he rescues a young lady who appeals to his code of honour, asking for help,

> . . . by the faythe that he ought unto Hym "in whose servyse thou arte entred [and for the feythe ye owe to the hyghe Ordre of Knyghthode, and] for kynge Arthures sake, which I suppose made the knyght, that thou helpe me and suffir me nat to be shamed of this knyght." (p. 961)

All the ideals Bors has been sworn to uphold are pitted against his natural desire to help his brother.[20] Faced with this dilemma, Bors calls on God to have mercy on Lionel and prepares to save the lady. Returning to Lionel as soon as he can, Bors is told by a religious man, who is mounted on a

---

[19] Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreal," in Lumiansky, p. 198, notes a change in the source.

[20] Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreal," in Lumiansky, p. 199.

"stronge blacke horse, blacker than a byry" (p. 962), that his brother is dead. Misled by a fiend in religious clothing but still strong in faith and steady of purpose, Bors then resists the efforts of ladies to appeal to his vow to serve them in an unworthy cause. Even as he is amazed by the sight of the ladies climbing a high tower with the intention of jumping off, Bors refuses their blandishments, crossing himself at the sight of this pitiful "mervayle." Before the sign of the cross the fiends, in the guise of maidens, disappear with "a grete noyse and grete cry" (p. 966), leaving Bors to continue his quest. A holy man reassures Bors that he has done the right thing in rescuing the lady and leaving his brother. Lionel is still alive, though a murderer and a knight who "doth contrary to the Ordre of Knyghthode" (p. 968). In assisting the lady Bors prevents a great wrong from occurring and saves the souls of two maidens from damnation, the lady's and her abductor's.

The final test for Bors takes the form of a confrontation with Lionel, who is violently angry because he was overlooked in favour of the lady. Loyalty to kin is an ancient rule still included in the code of courtesy but, in this case, superseded by the call for pity and service to ladies. Lionel has survived but the lady would certainly have lost her virtue. Lionel's demand for his brother's attention is related to his other sins of violence, murder, and the primitive need for revenge. Christian courtesy replaces these old errors of behaviour still practised by

Gawain and others to the detriment of society. Bors attempts a reconciliation with his brother but Lionel attacks him, knocking him from his horse.[21] As a hermit pleads mercy for the helpless Bors, Lionel, beyond hope of salvation and completely lacking in courtesy, "smote hym so harde that hys hede yode off bacwarde" (p. 971). Colleagraunce, a knight of the Round Table, is also killed as he tries to intervene on Bors' behalf. Lionel proves that he is an unrepentant murderer, even though he is of "grete chevalry and passyng hardy" (p. 972). Courtesy requires more than strength, a lesson which several knights learn to their dismay.

Bors, who understands Christian courtesy, remains unable to rise against his brother,[22] even to uphold the laws of chivalry concerning loyalty to a knight of the Round Table. He is rewarded by a miracle which makes a confrontation unnecessary. A voice commands,

> "Fle, sir Bors, and towche hym nat, othir ellis thou shalt sle him!"
> Ryght so alyght a clowde betwyxte them in lykenes of a fayre and a mervaylous flame, that bothe hir two shyldis brente. (p. 974)

Bors asks forgiveness for fighting with his brother and continues his quest until "by fortune he cam to the see" (p. 974). Finding the ship waiting for him, he enters it, and embarks on a voyage outside worldly time, in which the ship "to hys semyng . . . wente fleyng" (p. 974). After a period of darkness when he "myght know no man," Bors places himself

---

[21] Pauphilet, p. 125, discusses Lionel's sin.
[22] Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreal," in Lumiansky, pp. 202-3.

completely in the power of God and confidently falls asleep, secure as a child in the knowledge that the period spent on the ship will end safely. When light returns, Bors becomes aware that Percival is present, and "than he made of hym ryght grete joy, but sir Percival was abaysshed of hym and asked what he was" (p. 975). After the problem of identity has been solved, Percival and Bors exchange news and "aythir made grete joy of othir" (p. 975). They lack, Percival says, only the good knight Galahad for completion of the holy adventures. Faithful Percival and loyal, dutiful Bors have been tested and have proved themselves worthy companions for Galahad, the perfect knight, in the ultimate adventure of the Grail quest.

Secular knights, who lack the concentrated virtues of the three successful Grail achievers, struggle to interpret the training they have received at King Arthur's court in the light of spiritual adventures. Their failures illuminate the different emphasis on virtues in the Grail quest. Humility, devotion to God, perfect chastity and faith replace the need for renown of the proud worldly knight. For example, Bagdemagus, even though he knows he is not the "beste knyght," ignorantly risks his life in an adventure meant for Galahad. Drawn to the scene by curiosity, bravery, self-confidence and a devotion to the duty of achieving prowess, Bagdemagus claims the right to carry off a shield that he has been told will cause him to be "myscheved othir dede within three days" (p. 877). He is attacked and

severely wounded for his presumption by a knight who commands that the shield be given to Galahad. Skill at arms does not protect him, nor is he successful at gaining his desires by force. Galahad shows him the proper attitude as he waits, patiently, for a sign from a higher authority. When he is given the shield, Galahad says, "Now blyssed be good fortune!" (p. 879) Bagdemagus' lesson is clearly defined for as he barely escapes with his life.

With similar misunderstanding of this special quest Uwayne offers out of fellowship to ride with Galahad but his company is refused. Galahad says he must go alone on this important quest. Fellowship, a normal part of chivalric adventures, is no longer sought after since each knight must find his own spiritual understanding. As Arthur predicted, Uwayne is one of those who does not survive the quest. He humbly recognizes his limitations, as he dies, mortally wounded by Gawain in a duel.

Lack of experience causes the new young knight, Melias, who brings Galahad his shield, to be severely chastised for his enthusiasm and presumption. He is unable to learn from the mistake of Bagdemagus, whose punishment he witnessed, but he must experience at first hand the problems of trying to choose the proper virtues. Even when warned by Galahad, who repeats the strongly-worded notice in gold letters on a cross, Melias chooses the path on his "lyffte honde" to "preve" his strength (p. 883). This path leads through an

"olde foreste" to a "fayre medow,"[23] where temptations in the form of a golden crown and "many delycious metes" await him. Melias resists the temptation of food but succumbs to a desire for power represented by the golden crown which he takes with him. He is attacked and wounded for this error, but Galahad carries him gently to an abbey where he confesses his sins, a duty he had forgotten to perform before setting out on his quest. Galahad shows a gentle concern for his protégé, remaining with him three days until he is sure he will recover. Melias learns from this experience that he must make "clene" confession before taking on not only the Grail quest but "so ryche a thynge as the hyghe Order of Knyghthode." His sins include "covetyse" and "theffte," two distinctly unworthy attitudes in a knight (p. 886). Like others,[24] Melias confuses the Grail quest with a personal attraction for Galahad. He says he will seek Galahad as soon as he recovers, to which Galahad replies,"God sende you helthe!" (p. 886) Galahad's remarks frequently have a pointed meaning which other knights do not notice. The cadence of his speech is biblical, as when he says, "aryse up and shew thy good wyll" (p. 1033) and his comments sometimes reflect the words of the communion service.

---

[23] As in Gawain's dream, the "fayre medow" of patience and humility is ignored for man-made objects representing power.

[24] Scudder, Le Morte Darthur, p. 298.

A strong contrast to perfection is provided by Gawain, who is the most wicked of the knights who attempt the quest. His mistakes make the meaning of the quest clear through comparison with Galahad's actions and Lancelot's sincere attempts to improve. Gawain proudly resists the efforts of a hermit who tries to show him a better way. He refuses penance, believing that "we knyghtes adventures many times suffir grete woo and payne" (p. 892). He understands penitence to be sacrificing the comforts of a courtly life -- the literal sense of the hair shirt -- when acceptance of his sins, repentance and faith, are his real needs. Gawain does not value mercy, humility, mesure and fidelity in love and because he persists in his violent behaviour, he is called a "wycked knyght" (p. 892). His lack of courtesy also affects his prowess as a knight, for there were many "knyghtes that overmacched sir Gawayne for all his thryse double myghte that he had" (p. 162). A true knight strives to perfect Christian virtues, aspiring to an ideal P. E. Tucker calls Malory's "austere ideal" of knighthood.[25] It is Gawain's curiosity and willfullness which precipitate the great adventure of the quest, and he is the one who complains most bitterly that he can find "none adventure" (p. 941) although others suffer this difficulty as well.

Gawain's particular sins are violence, refusing to give mercy and forgetting to follow the path of mesure when he is tempted to demand old-style vengeance. From the day of his

---

[25] P. E. Tucker, "Chivalry in the Morte," from Essays, p. 68.

first quest, when he beheaded an innocent maiden after refusing mercy to her knight, Gawain continually breaks the rules of courtesy. At the Castle of Maidens he kills seven knights and later he kills Uwayne, a knight of the Round Table. Even as he returns to Camelot, defeated in the Holy Quest, he kills Bagdemagus for no apparent reason. He dies a violent death himself defending his king, a loyalty he never forgets but his nature is hard for him to control. He says he was "mysfortuned" to be "smytten uppon the strooke" Lancelot gave him at Benwick (p. 1230), although Gawain had demanded that Lancelot meet him in a duel and he previously admitted that he sought his own death. He believes that he "smote of" the head of the maiden by "mysse fortune" (p. 106), and that he killed the seven knights "by fortune" (p. 891). Arthur's beloved nephew is doomed to play his tragic role, vindication of a sort provided by Malory for the brave knight whose loyalty to the king never falters.

Gawain is one of the most wicked of the Round Table knights and the most lacking in courtesy. Even after he has been instructed by a holy man he continues, through ignorance, to make the same mistakes of pride. A dream granted to Gawain and Ector explains the deficiencies of knights who do not live up to their own ideal. Interpretation of the dream by a hermit reveals that the Round Table was founded by Merlin for the encouragement of humility and patience. Most of the Round Table knights, represented in the dream as black bulls, proudly refuse to

accept the rewards offered in the meadow of humility and patience, prefering to eat from the elevated, man-made rack of hay. Their blackness signifies that they are "withoute good vertues or workes" (p. 946). Two white bulls, and one white bull with a single black spot, grazing together in the meadow, represent Galahad and Percival, who are chaste and sinless, and Bors, who "trespassed but onys in his viginite" (p. 946). Humility is shown by the halters that the white bulls wear about their necks. The black bulls are knights who embarked on the Grail quest without stopping to confess their sins. These find themselves wandering in "waste contreys: that signifieth dethe, for there shall dye many off them" (p. 946).

Gawain, lacking faith and discouraged by the meaning revealed in the dream, concludes that the quest is hopelessly difficult for him. He lacks the patience to listen further to the hermit, giving a feeble excuse so that he may leave: "Sir," seyde sir Gawayne, "and I had leyser I wolde speke with you, but my fellow sir Ector ys gone and abithe yondir bynethe the hylle" (p. 949). The worldly friendship of Sir Ector has a greater appeal for Gawain than pursuing a solitary understanding of the hermit's words which would lead to spiritual progress. Other lesser knights lack the patience to learn. Ector, also, leaves the hermit and many others actually die in the quest. Ordinary knights in Arthur's court lack humility, pity and devotion to the faith, deficiencies which make them unfit for the Grail

quest. Salvation must be a personal concern and is therefore a solitary pursuit which conflicts with the joys of earthly fellowship.

Sir Ector is granted a dream describing the temptation to fall into pride, which successful knights must resist. In the dream Ector and his brother Lancelot are seated in a chair. They leave the chair and leap up on the backs of horses. Lancelot is beaten and "dispoyled" by a man who dresses him in clothing "full of knottis" (p. 942) forcing him to ride an ass. Lancelot tries to drink from a well, but the water recedes as he drinks. He returns to his chair. Lancelot, a hermit explains, has repented, leaving his pride behind in the Grail quest. He has taken to humility, and recognizing that the water of the well, which represents the "hyghe grace of God" (p. 947) has been denied him, he humbly accepts the fact that he is not worthy to drink. Since he has asked for God's help, he is more humble than Ector, who in his dream attempted to join a wedding party at a rich man's house. Rejected by the host, he returns to his position of pride in the elevated chair. The hermit warns that Round Table knights lack "charite, abstinaunce, and trouthe" (p. 948). Sir Ector admires the qualities which make his brother the most courteous knight, but he is unable to measure up to the challenge himself.

Lancelot, alone in this personal quest for spiritual enlightenment,[26] begins by relying on rules of secular

---

[26] Scudder, p. 292.

courtesy to govern his behaviour. His integrity as a knight is faultless, but he must learn the value of mesure just as Arthur did. Lancelot learns humility and faith as well, making him the best example of well-rounded courtesy in the land of Logres. His sincere attempts to learn the way of Christian courtesy lead him to a crossroads with a marble stone "but hit was so durke that sir Launcelot myght nat wete what hyt was" (p. 893) a statement meaning that the Christian way is difficult and not always clear to sinners. A chapel, deserted and old but containing an altar "full rychely arayde with clothe of clene sylke," supports "a clene fayre candyll stykke whych bare six grete candyls therein, and the candilstyk was of sylver" (p. 894). Lancelot tries to enter but "he coude fynde no place where he myght enter." Since he is denied the right to approach the mysteries closely, he "layde hym downe to slepe uppon his shylde before the crosse" (p. 894). A preview of his adventures in the Grail quest passes before him as he lies unable to stir, paralyzed by his sin. A hermit explains later that he lacks "good thought" and "good wylle" and is "defouled with lechery" (p. 898).

The Grail appears where sinners are only "if hit be unto their grete hurte other unto their shame" (p. 897). A knight is healed through a miracle and before Lancelot's eyes, takes his horse, helm and sword, symbols of his knightly power, away from him. As predicted, Lancelot is shamed and injured by paralysis. He is warned that he should

confess, however, and he seeks out a hermit for this purpose. Lancelot recognizes that the duty of a penitent Christian, the rules of the Hyghe Order of Knyghthode and courtesy all share the same aims. While loving "a quene immeasurabely and oute of mesure longe" (p. 897), he has done battle for her sake "were hit ryght other wronge." These battles were fought "for to wynne worship and to cause me the bettir to be beloved" (p. 897) he admits and, furthermore, he has neglected to thank God for his success. The hermit points out that Lancelot should be more virtuous because he is more favoured by God than any other man. Lancelot asks humbly for help, staying to listen to the exemplum of the hermit, who likens Lancelot to stone for his hardness of heart, to a bitter tree for his sins and to a fig-tree "that had levys and no fruyte" (p. 898).

Lancelot's next adventure is patterned so closely on a secular adventure that he is unable to distinguish the meaning. Confused by the setting, which ressembles a tournament, Lancelot relies on the worldly rules he has learned at King Arthur's court. "For to helpe here the wayker party in incresyng of his shevalry" (p. 931) Lancelot joins the battle without asking for guidance. Because he "ded many mervaylous dedes of armys" (p. 931) but still failed to overcome the stronger party, Lancelot feels shamed, not realizing that he has relied on rules of secular courtesy; he has neglected those of Christian courtesy, mesure, humility and faith. A maiden lowers his self-esteem

further by explaining that although he was "the moste mervayloust man of the worlde" in worldly adventures, he must not be surprised to endure defeat at the hands of the knights of "hevynly adventures" (p. 933). Humbled by his failure to achieve prowess by skill at arms, Lancelot passes successfully over a river "that hyght Mortays" (p. 1011), commending himself to God. His horse is killed beneath him by a knight "horse and man all black as a bere," but Lancelot does not protest this humbling event (p. 935).[27] Instead he "tok hys helme and hys shylde, and thanked God of hys adventure" (p. 935). [28]

Lancelot's adventures lead him gradually toward the Castle of Corbenic. He obeys, when ordered by a voice, to "entir into the firste shippe that thou shalt fynde!" even though it is "withoute sayle other ore" (p. 1011). Within the ship [29] Lancelot experiences spiritual fulfillment in the company of Percival's dead sister, a sacrificial figure. As Scudder remarks, "So purified, so illumined, he is ready at last for fellowship with Galahad."[30] Lancelot has bowed completely to God's will and is sustained solely by "the grace of the Holy Goste. "For "halffe a yere" Galahad and Lancelot serve God "dayly and nyghtly" in an interlude "nat

---

[27] Earlier he challenges a knight in the forest who appears, riding on his horse.

[28] This time he retains his armour. His worldly armour, taken by the knight while Lancelot was immobilized by a trance, has been replaced by a hermit. See Pauphilet, pp. 47-50.

[29] The ship is often a symbol of the church; see Sill, pp. 28, 134.

[30] Scudder, p. 293.

in the q[uest] of the Sankgreal"(p. 1013) but a time in which they enjoy the pleasures of their earthly relationship, until Galahad is called away to continue his quest. Lancelot must continue his struggle for understanding while Galahad, who is God's agent, finishes the tasks he is called to perform. Malory increases the pace of Galahad's adventures, creating a sense of urgency as the end of his sojourn with the Round Table knights nears.

After this comforting, strengthening episode, which lasts forty days, Lancelot is brought at midnight in his ship to the back door of the Castle of Corbenic. There are no horns sounded for the unexpected guest and none of the rituals of hospitality normally afforded knights who arrive late at night to ask for shelter in hermitages, monasteries and castles. He reaches the castle and enters it but must be reminded that faith is stronger in religious adventures than feats of arms. When he puts up his sword, he passes the guardians of the gate without difficulty, finding all doors but one open in the castle. Lancelot is prevented from approaching the Grail chamber but when he falls to his knees to pray for his greatest desire, the door opens, allowing him to see parts of a mysterious ceremony centred on the Holy Vessel at the altar. Great light fills the chamber.[31]

In an attempt to assist a seemingly overburdened priest, a natural action for a knight used to employing his strength to help others, Lancelot forgets that he has been

---

[31] Pauphilet, p. 107, on the symbolism of light.

forbidden to enter. As predicted, he is struck by a flash of Holy Fire and falls paralyzed to the floor outside in the hall, where the inhabitants discover him the next morning. He is cared for, as a stranger, until he recovers twenty-four days later, each day representing a year of sinful life. During this time Lancelot is granted a partial understanding of the Holy mysteries of the Sankgreal, for which he gives humble thanks. The most courteous knight, although sinful, is forgiven and allowed to know the joys of Christian faith. Courtesy is the key to improvement of the knight, a lesson which is reinforced by evidence of divine approval in the adventures of the quest for the Holy Grail.

Corbenic, where a perfect, dedicated community lives in peace and contentment, has similarities to King Arthur's court, another sign that the aims of King Arthur are divinely inspired. There are differences, however. The Grail castle of Corbenic, where Lancelot and the other Grail knights experience the mysteries of Christianity, shelters a community which is absorbed in the task of protecting and honouring the Holy Grail. Monks who are aware of the meaning behind mysterious events which Round Table knights glimpse briefly, in privileged moments, devote their lives to sustaining rituals and in preparation for Galahad's predicted visit. King Pelles prepares his daughter for her important role as mother of Galahad. Strange adventures occur within the castle walls; for example, a dolorous lady (Elaine) must be rescued by Lancelot and a serpent released

from a tomb. The Holy Grail feeds those chosen by King Pelles to be so honoured and an enchantress arranges that Lancelot will be deceived into thinking Elaine is Guinevere. Bors suggests that it should be called the Castle Adventures. King Pelles agrees that there are differences from worldly courts like Camelot, for Gawain, "the good knyght, gate lytyll worshyp here" (p. 799).

Virtue precedes "worship" in Corbenic, where no knight wins worship "but yf he be of worshyp hymselff and of good lyvynge." He must love God "ellys he getyth no worship here, be he never so hardy a man". To Bors, "That is a wondir thynge" (p. 799). He seeks the opportunity to test his faith, alone, in the strange adventure of the castle, although he is warned that "hit ys harde and ye ascape wythoute a shame" (p. 799). A prerequisite for survival is "clene" confession soon fulfilled and, since Bors is "a vergyne sauff for one," success is assured.

The preliminary tests of faith essential for the Christian include a marvellous bed made dangerous by a spear which descends on the occupant, a knight who enters the room and fights a duel, arrows that come from nowhere "so thyk that he mervayled" and an "hedyous lion" (p. 800). Once Bors has passed these tests, allegorical visions describe the destruction of an old dragon with gold letters on his forehead which say "Kyng Arthur." "Smale dragons," representing his own knights, devour their master. Tantalizing bits of the history of the Holy Grail, provided

by a biblical figure with a harp who has two "addirs" about his neck, conclude with the arrival of the "whyghtyst dowve that ever he saw "wyth a lytyll goldyn sensar in her mowthe" (p. 801). Voices from above give commands and the Holy Mysteries surrounding the Grail proceed in an orderly, pre-ordained fashion. Precedence is important here as it is in Camelot. A tempest, good "savoures" and great light accompany marvels at Corbenic. The wind and the light, biblical figures of speech and the "savoures" have both a Christian and pagan background.[32] To Bors is given the mission of telling Lancelot that he is the best knight of the world except for his one sin; however, in the spiritual quest of the Sankgreal he "shall have many hys bettyrs" (p. 801), a message which is repeated several times during the quest.

Corbenic is the place where religious instruction and inspiration take place, whereas Camelot, honoured by visits from the Holy Grail, teaches courtesy, a worldly combination of chivalric and Christian virtues meant to be a practical guide for behaviour. Corbenic has some of the features of an Otherworld castle but Bors and others visit it without difficulty.[33]

---

[32] Howard Patch, The Otherworld, According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), pp. 68,69,72,137,156. R. S. Loomis, The Grail From Celtic Myth to Christian Symbol (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1963), pp. 20-27.

[33] Pauphilet, p. 121. Malory includes the castle of Corbenic from the Queste, of which Pauphilet says, "le chateau du Graal. . . n"est la "qu"un chateau comme tous les autres." See F. Lot, Etudes sur le Lancelot, p.215. Corbenic also has features of the romance castle of adventures, such

There is a bridge of "Corbyn" (p. 797) which Bors traverses, whereas Lancelot arrives by ship. Ector has no problem reaching the outer courtyard, but he is not welcome during the visitation of the Grail, when only those who are worthy may enter. Elaine comes and goes freely and marvels that Lancelot has only visited once that she knows of. When Elaine, encouraged by her father, visits Camelot "appareyled unto the purpose" with twenty knights and ten ladies "to the numbir of an hondred horse" (p. 803), Malory shows that courtly rituals are accepted as worthy expressions of respect for order by the Grail-Keeper, King Pelles. Elaine's enjoyment of luxury takes place at Camelot, however, not within Corbenic, where spiritual celebrations and marvellous adventures absorb attention.

Corbenic has a special reason for existence which is related to the Holy Grail. The castle of Corbenic is usually "achieved" after strange adventures and difficult tests of faith which occur in another time frame. Bors, Percival and Galahad do not attempt to find the castle until they have completed the tasks assigned to them. They arrive in the ship called "Faythe," since Corbenic functions on an allegorical level as the Church, protector of the faith, shelter for a community of Christians with its chosen priests and attendants. King Pelles presides over an unusual court, which is the pattern for peaceful order. Corbenic concentrates on protection of religious beliefs and the

---

[33] (cont'd)as the perilous bed.

worship of relics. Precious objects, especially a silver table, the spear of Longinus and the Holy Grail are symbols in which Malory concentrates the meaning of the spiritual quest. They provide links between the past, present and future which are revealed within the Castle of Corbenic. Joseph of Arimathea and God himself provide lessons in the meaning of the divine plan for mankind which encompasses all time and which indicates God's concern for his people.

Galahad's arrival, the great event which Corbenic awaits, is preceded by Lancelot's premature landing at the back door of the castle. Interrupting the ritual of preparation for the expected healing of the Maimed King and the redemption of the land of Logres, Lancelot discovers that he is not expected by the Grail-keepers and that he is allowed only a brief glimpse of the mysteries which engage them. He leaves, comforted somewhat by the hospitality of the inhabitants, after accepting his limitations and humbly giving thanks for the partial vision of the Grail granted to him. The end of the quest for the Holy Grail nears when Galahad arrives at Corbenic accompanied by Bors and Percival. King Pelles "knew hem" and "there was grete joy" (p. 1027) at the arrival of the expected visitor who has come for a special reason.

Immediately the broken sword is brought out to be mended by a miracle. A voice announces that the important ceremony, so long awaited, is about to begin. The company gathers to partake of a feast. A re-enactment of the

ceremony in which the first Bishop of England was consecrated takes place in the presence of nine other knights who have hurried from all the corners of Arthur's domain, Ireland, Denmark and Gaul, to join in the Holy festivities. Joseph, "the firste bysshop of Crystendom," presides over a mysterious and heavily symbolic ritual. Served by angels who carry candles, symbolizing the Light of the World and the spear of Longinus, which bled "mervaylously" (p. 1029), with the drops of blood being carefully preserved in a box, Joseph says mass, at which transubstantiation occurs visibly. The "servauntes of Jesu Cryste" present at Corbenic are "fedde afore thys table with swete metis that never knyghtes yet tasted" (p. 1029), in a feast which illustrates the differences and similarities between ritual celebrations at Corbenic and at Camelot.

The Castle of Corbenic differs from worldly courts in the simplicity of the surroundings which are not worthy even to be mentioned. The story of Corbenic concentrates instead on a single important, all-absorbing idea, a contrast to the pomp and ceremony which accompanies enjoyment of the plenitude celebrated at Camelot. Instead of honouring prowess and presenting proofs of power and riches, the master of ceremonies humbles the guests, when, following prayer, the guests "saw a man com oute of the holy vessell that had all the sygnes of the Passion of Jesu Cryste bledynge all opynly" (p. 1029). The figure offers "the hyghe order and mete whych ye have so much desired," serving

Galahad first, as he kneels. The others are served in a similar manner and "they thought hit so sweete that hit was mervaylous to telle" (p. 1030). The confusion of colour, odours, sounds and activities of secular feasts is concentrated in one ultimate, largely indescribable experience.

Once Galahad has completed his pre-ordained tasks, the knights hastily prepare to leave Corbenic as they set aside comfort and security for the important business they are called to perform. Galahad stops to give a courteous message to the departing knights of Gaul, asking them to communicate one last time with his fellow knights at Camelot. Because he will not return himself, he asks that they "salew my lorde sir Launcelot, my fadir, and hem all of the Rounde Table" (p. 1031).

The ship which carries the three to Sarras is the same marvellous ship built by Solomon, called "Faythe," which Percival's sister explained to them in detail when she gird Galahad with David's sword. The table of silver, which they had last seen with the Maimed King, and the Sankgreal, rest on the bed in the ship. A few, precious objects contain the mysteries of the church, and even these are destined to be removed from England. The people of Logres, in spite of King Arthur's attempts to raise the Christian conscience through the practice of an ideal which is the best he could envisage, have forfeited the right to possess the Holy Grail at Corbenic, "For they be turned to evyll lyvyng, and

therfore I shall disherite them of the honoure whych I have done them" (p. 1030). As Arthur feared, the aims of the mystic quest of the Holy Grail, containing a striving for closer communication with God, separates men from their earthly ties. Galahad, chaste and single-minded, prays to join his Father in heaven and his prayer is answered.

Galahad is strong, brave, gentle and loving; he is concientious and devout, he is obedient and humble, all virtues which courteous knights are bound to honour. Galahad is also chaste and never interested in his own prowess. He allows God credit for his abilities, a virtue which Lancelot, the best "erthely" knight of the world, must learn. Galahad remains a distant figure,[34] semi-divine, "for he worchith all by myracle, and he shall never be overcom of none erthely mannes hande" (p. 906). A symbol of spiritual perfection, Galahad is given the form of a knight who, like Lancelot, is a member of the Round Table. King Arthur's ideal society acquires merit from its association with this purely ideal figure. The importance of Christian goals to the meaning which lies behind courtesy in Malory's Morte Darthur is stressed through the central position of the Grail quest.

---

[34] Moorman, "The Tale of the Sankgreal," in Lumiansky, p. 196.

V. Conclusion

Courtesy in Malory's Morte Darthur embodies an ideal which the author would like to revive as a guiding principle for English society, an ideal expressing "the spirit of an epoch that was passing away." [1] Based on the tradition of chivalry as it was modified by Christianity and by changing conditions of courtly society in the fifteenth century, courtesy, or the code of behaviour recognized at court, was influenced by the military, religious and social needs which helped to form its framework.

Courtesy books of the fourteenth and fifteenth century show an increasing interest in the ideals of chivalry distinct from the earlier concentration on practical rules of maintaining an army. Courtly love provided an inspiration for knightly deeds, an ideal which became part of the meaning of courtesy. Changing social conditions, which demanded modification of the feudal system in the later Middle Ages and encouraged the establishment of fixed courts presided over by the king, influenced attitudes toward courtly behaviour.

After the time of Richard II (1377-99) a conscious attempt to perfect knowledge and skills in cultural matters changed the disposition of court life. The court became a separate community dedicated to dramatizing ideals and to

---

[1] Scudder, p. 182.

paying homage to beliefs based on an appreciation of divine order. Worth was proved in material ways and was honoured in rituals, processions and tournaments. Great feasts celebrated personal and political triumphs such as marriages, coronations and victories in battle. Malory's tale describing the rise and fall of England's greatest legendary king, one of the Nine Worthies, reflects love of ritual and the moral concerns of the ruling class in the fifteenth century. King Arthur presides over a court famous as a model of courtesy, where great value was attached to virtues of nobility, courage, generosity, hospitality, mesure, sensitivity to the joys and sorrows of others, service to ladies and the demonstration of prowess. Characterization and plot in Morte Darthur are designed to illustrate the value of these virtues to society.

Malory has developed King Arthur's role as the most courteous king in the world. He is the greatest member of the ruling class by virtue of divine election, but he is also suitable because of his noble origins, his heroic qualities and the training he accepts from Merlin. The king is a great knight and therefore an example of excellence for other members of the Round Table. His special vision for the future of a Christian society leads to his position as administrator of a just, orderly and splendid court, dedicated to the principles of Christian chivalry.

Malory traces this ideal of excellence through his characterization of Lancelot, the best "erthely" knight of

the world, who provides an example for the youth of the ruling class, young men like Torre and Gareth. He embodies the virtues of Christian courtesy taught at King Arthur's court and his successes and failures guide the direction and the suspense of the plot.

Galahad, the symbol of the Christian faith and morality, inspires the desire in Round Table knights to improve their society. He is an agent of God who is predestined to appear on a mission from heaven to serve as a sign that the covenant between man and God is intact. Faithful Christians are comforted by the knowledge that divine order survives human disasters. It is significant that Galahad serves his brief life as a knight of King Arthur's court, honouring courteous gestures and rituals, serving ladies chastely and briefly enjoying the fellowship of the Round Table.

Courtesy is an ideal form of communication between knights and their peers, their ladies and their God. The meaning of courtesy has an historical base which gives Malory's concept credibility. Since courtesy is linked with political, social and religious success in Morte Darthur, it becomes more than just an impression of polite behaviour.

Bibliography

Allmand, C. T. "The Civil Lawyers," in Profession, Vocation and Culture in the Later Middle Ages. Ed. Cecil Clough. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982.

Aquinas, Saint Thomas. Summa Theologica. In Selected Political Writings. Trans. J. Dawson. Ed. A. D'Entrèves. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965.

Annuziata, A. "The Pas D'Armes and Its Occurances in Malory," in Chivalric Literature. Eds. Larry Benson and John Leyerle. Michigan: Medieval Institute Publications, 1980.

Atiya, A. Crusade, Commerce and Culture. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1962.

Auerbach, Eric. Mimesis. Translated from the German by Willard Trask. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1957.

Augustine, Saint. City of God (De Civitate Dei). Translated by John Healey. Edinburgh: John Grant, 1909.

Austin, T., ed. Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books. London: Trubner & Co., 1888.

Baldwin, C. S. Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400). New York: Macmillan Company, 1928.

Barber, Richard. The Knight and Chivalry. Ipswich: Boydell Press, 1970.

Bennett, H. S. The Pastons and Their England. Cambridge: University Press, 1951.

Bennett, J. A. W., ed. Essays on Malory. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Benson, Larry D. Malory's "Morte Darthur." Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976.

Benson, Larry D., ed. King Arthur's Death: The Middle English Stanzaic "Morte Arthur" and the Alliterative Morte Arthur." New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1974.

Boase, Roger. The Origin and Meaning of Courtly Love. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977.

Bornstein, Diane. Mirrors of Courtesy. Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1975.

Bogdanow, Fanni. The Romance of the Grail. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966.

Brewer, D. S., ed. The Morte Darthur, Parts Seven and Eight, by Sir Thomas Malory. London: Edward Arnold, 1968.

----------. "The hoole book," in Essays on Malory. Ed. J. A. W. Bennett. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

----------. "Courtesy and the Gawain Poet," from Patterns of Love and Courtesy. Ed. J. Lawlor. London: Edward Arnold, 1966.

Bruce, J. D. The Evolution of Arthurian Romance. Second Edition. Three Volumes. Gloucester, Massachusetts: Peter Smith, 1958.

Briffault, Robert S. The Troubadours. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965.

Buchon, J. A. C., ed. Choix de Chroniques et Mémoires sur l'Histoire de France. Paris: Paul Daffis, 1876.

Cartellieri, Otto. The Court of Burgandy. London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1929.

Castiglione, Baldassare. The Book of the Courtier. From Three Renaissance Classics. Introduction and notes by Burton Milligan. New York: Charles Schribners Sons, 1953.

Caxton, William, trans. Order of Chyualry. From the French version of Ramon Lull's Le libre del ordre de Cauayleria. Ed. A. Byles. London: Oxford University Press, 1926.

----------, ed. The Boke of Noblesse. Translated by J. Larke. Reel #4-1. Microfilm Materials.

Chambers, E. K. Arthur of Britain. Second edition. Cambridge: Speculum Historiale, 1964.

Chaytor, H. J. The Troubadours and England. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923.

Cheney C. R. and M. G. Cheney, eds. Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England and Wales (1198-1216). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

Clephan, R. Coltman. The Tournament: Its Periods and Phases. New York: Frederick Unger Publishing Co., 1919.

Cline, Ruth. "The Influence of the Romances on the

Tournaments of the Middle Ages." Speculum, 20 (1945), 204-211.

Clough, Cecil, ed. Profession, Vocation and Culture. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1982.

Cornish, F. W. Chivalry. London: George Allen and Co. Ruskin House, 1911.

Cosman, M. P. The Education of the Hero in Arthurian Romance. Durham North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1965.

Coulton, G. G. Chaucer and His England. London: Methuen and Co., 1952.

Crapelet, G. A. Cérémonies des Gages de Bataille. Paris: G. A. Crapelet, 1830.

Cross T. P. and W. A. Nitze. Lancelot and Guenevere. A Study on the Origins of Courtly Love. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1930.

Crotch, J. B, ed. The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton. London: Oxford University Press, 1928.

Davies, R. T., ed. Medieval English Lyrics. London: Faber and Faber, 1963.

Denomy, Alexander. "Courtly Love and Courtliness." Speculum, 28 (1953), 44-63.

D'Entrèves, A., ed. Selected Political Writings. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1965.

Dupin, Henri. La Courtoisie Au Moyen Age. Paris: A. Picard, 1931.

Eriksen, C., ed. The Anglo-Norman Text of "Le Lai du Cors." Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959.

Fabyan, Robert. The Chronicles of England and France [1516] Edition. Ed. Henry Ellis. London: F. C. and J. Rivington et al, 1811.

Ferguson, Arthur B. The Indian Summer of English Chivalry. Studies in the Decline and Transformation of Chivalric Idealism. Durham North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1960.

Ferrante, Joan, and G. Economou. In Pursuit of Perfection Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, 1975.

Field, P. J. C. Romance and Chronicle. London: Barrie and

Jenkins, 1971.

Fisher, John, ed. The Complete Poetry and Prose of Geoffrey Chaucer. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1977.

Fletcher, R. H. The Arthurian Material in the Chronicles, especially those of Great Britain and France. Second edition. New York: Burt Franklin, 1966.

Frappier, Jean. Amour Courtois et Table Ronde. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1973.

----------. Chrétien de Troyes Paris: Hatier-Boivin, 1968.

----------. Autour du Graal. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1977.

Froissart. The Chronicles of Froissart. Trans. Lord Berners. Ed. W. E. Henley. London: Long Acre, 1903.

Fulcher of Chartres. Chronicle of the First Crusade. Trans. M. E. McGinty. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1941.

Furnivall, F. J. Tournaments. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1903.

----------, ed. Early English Meals and Manners. London: Trubner et al., 1868.

Geoffrey of Monmouth. The Historia Regum Britanniae. Trans. R. E. Jones. London: Longman's, Green & Co., 1929.

Gerson, Jean, ed. Ouvres Complètes. Seven Volumes. Belgium: Desclée, 1960.

Gousset, M. T., D. Poiron, F. Unter Kircher, eds. Le Coeur d'Amour Epris by René d'Anjou. Vesoul: Philippe Lebaud, 1981.

Greaves, Margaret. The Blazon of Honour. London: Methuen, 1964.

Hanning, R. H. The Vision of History in Early Britain. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.

Henderson, E. F., ed. Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages. London: George Bell, 1892.

Holinshed. Chronicles. Ed. Stephen Booth. Six Volumes. San Francisco Book Club of California, 1968.

Holmes, U. T. and Sr. M. Amelia Klenke. Chretien, Troyes and the Grail. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959.

Hoyt, Robert S. Europe in the Middle Ages. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1957.

Huizinga, J. The Waning of the Middle Ages. London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1927.

Jacobs, R. G. The Literature of the Bible. Iowa: W. M. C. Brown Co., 1969.

Keen, M. H. England in the Later Middle Ages. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1973.

----------The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965.

Kennedy, Beverley. "Malory's Lancelot: 'Trewest Lover, of a Synful Man.'" Viator, 12 (1981), 409-427.

Kolve, V. A. The Play Called "Corpus Christi." Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1966.

Knowles, D. The Evolution of Medieval Thought. Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962.

Lambert, Mark. Malory: Style and Vision in "Le Morte Darthur." New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975.

Langlois, Ch-V. La Vie en France au Moyen Age de la fin du XII au Milieu du XIV Siècle. Etienne von Fougière's "Livre des Manières." Paris: Librairie Hachett, 1925.

Lawlor, John. Patterns of Love and Courtesy. London: Edward Arnold Publishers Limited, 1966.

Lewis C. S. Allegory of Love. A Study in Medieval Tradition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936.

----------. The Discarded Image. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.

----------. "The English Prose Morte," from Essays on Malory. Ed. J. A. W. Bennett. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Locke, F. W. The Quest for the Holy Grail. A Literary Study of a Thirteenth Century French Romance. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1960.

Loomis L. H. Adventures in the Middle Ages. New York: Burt Franklin, 1962.

Loomis, Roger Sherman, ed. Arthurian Literature in the

Middle Ages. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1959.

----------. The Grail From Celtic Myth to Christian Symbol. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1963.

----------. Studies in Medieval Literature. New York: Burt Franklin, 1970.

Lumiansky, R. M. Malory's Originality. A Critical Study of Le Morte Darthur. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964.

Madden, F., ed. Sir Gawayne: A Collection of Ancient Romance Poems. London: Richard and John Taylor, 1971.

Maritain, Jacques. Saint Thomas Aquinas. New York: Meridan Books, 1959.

Markland, Murray, ed. John of Salisbury's "Policraticus," The Statesman's Book. New York: Frederick Unger, 1979.

Matarasso, Pauline. The Redemption of Chivalry. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1979.

Mathew, Gervase. Court of Richard II. London: The Camelot Press Ltd., 1968.

----------. "Ideals of Knighthood in the Late Fourteenth Century." In Studies in Medieval History Presented to Frederich Maurice Powiche. Eds. R. W. Hunt, W. A. Pantin, and R. W. Southern. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948.

McFarlane, K. B. England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays. London: Hambledon Press, 1981.

Mead, W. E. The English Medieval Feast. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1931.

Menestrier,Claude-Francois, 1631-1705. Traité des Tournois, Joustes, Carrousels, et Autres Spectacles Publics. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1978.

Mierow, C. C. The Deeds of Frederick Barabarossa. New York: Columbia University Press, 1953.

----------, trans. The Letters of Saint Jerome. Vol. 1. New York: Newman Press, 1963.

Moorman, Charles. The Book of Kyng Arthur. The Unity of Malory's "Morte Darthur." Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1965.

----------. "The Tale of the Sankgreal," in Malory's Originality. Ed. R. M. Lumiansky. Baltimore: Johns

Hopkins Press, 1964.

Morgan, Sr. M. L. Galahad in English Literature. Washington: Catholic University of America, 1932.

Myers, A., ed. The Household of Edward IV. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959.

Newman, F. X., ed. The Meaning of Courtly Love. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1968.

Owst, G. R. Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England. Cambridge: University Press, 1933.

Painter, Sidney. French Chivalry. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940.

Parry, J. J, trans. The Art of Courtly Love, by Andreas Capellanus. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1964.

Patch, Howard. The Goddess Fortuna in Medieval Literature. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927.

----------. The Other World, According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950.

Pauphilet, Albert. Etudes sur la Queste del Saint Graal, attribuée à Gautier Map. Paris: H. Champion, 1968.

Penninger, F. E. William Caxton. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979.

Petitot, Claude Bernard (1772-1825). Collections des Mémoires Relatifs à l'Histoire de France. Paris: Foucault, 1819-1829.

Pickford, Cedric, and Rex Last, eds. The Arthurian Bibliography. Volume I. Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer Ltd., 1981.

Pickering, Frederick. Literature and Art in the Middle Ages. London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1970.

Pisan, Christine de. Livre du Corps de Policie. Trans. Diane Bornstein. Heidelburg: Carl Winter, 1977.

----------. The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye. Trans. William Caxton. Ed. A. Byles. London: Oxford University Press, 1937.

Pochada, E. T. Arthurian Propaganda. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971.

Rhys, John. Studies in the Arthurian Legend. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891.

Rumble, Thomas. "The Tale of Tristram," in Essays on Malory, Ed. J. A. W. Bennett. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Salle, Antoine de la. Le Petit Johan de Saintré, 1386-1462. Trans. Irvine Gray. London: George Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1931.

Sands, D., ed. Middle English Verse Romances. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1966.

Scrope, Stephen, trans. Epistle of Othéa, by Christine de Pisan. Ed. Curt Buhler. London: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Scudder, Vida. "Le Morte Darthur" of Sir Thomas Malory. New York: Haskell House, 1965.

Sill, G. G. A Handbook of Symbols in Christian Art. New York: Collier Books, 1975.

Slaughter, E. E. Virtue According to Love. New York: Bookman Associates 1957.

Sykes, J. B., ed. Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

Takamiya, Toshiyuki and Derek Brewer. Aspects of Malory. Cambridge: Rowman and Littlefield, 1981.

Tatlock, J. S. P. Legendary History of Britain. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and its Early Vernacular Versions. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950.

Thatcher, O. J., and E. H. McNeal, eds. A Source Book for Medieval History. New York: Charles Schribners, 1907.

Tierney, Brian. The Crisis of Church and State (1050-1300). New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1964.

Tucker, P. E. "Chivalry in the Morte" in Essays on Malory. Ed. J. A. W. Bennett. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Tuchman, Barbara. A Distant Mirror. The Calamitous Fourteenth Century. New York: Ballantyne Books, 1978.

Tolkien, J. R. R. and E. V. Gordon, eds. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. Second edition. Revised by Norman Davis. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

Tuve, Rosamund. Allegorical Imagery. Some Medieval Books and

their Posterity. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966.

Vinaver, Eugene. The Works of Sir Thomas Malory. Second edition. Three volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967.

----------. Malory. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929.

----------. The Rise of Romance. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.

----------. Tristan dans Malory. Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1925.

Wheatley, Henry, ed. Merlin or the Early History of King Arthur: A Prose Romance. Two Volumes. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1899.

Whitaker, Muriel. "Allegorical Imagery in Malory's 'Tale of the Noble King Arthur and the Emperor Lucius.'" Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 74 (1973).

Whitehead, F. "On Certain Aspects in the Fourth Book of Malory's Morte Darthur." Medium Aevum, 2 (1933).

Willhelm, J. J., ed. Medieval Song. New York: Dutton Publishing Co., 1971.

Wimsatt, W. K. The Verbal Icon. Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press, 1954.

Wittig, Susan. Stylistic and Narrative Structures in the Medieval Romances. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1978.

Woolf, Rosemary. English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968.

Wright, Thomas. "The Tale of King Arthur." In Malory's Originality. Ed. R. M. Lumiansky. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964.